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THE EUROPEAN CARAVAN

PART I

THE EUROPEAN CARAVAN

AN ANTHOLOGY OF THE NEW SPIRIT IN EUROPEAN LITERATURE

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PART I

FRANCE, SPAIN, ENGLAND and IRELAND

BREWER, WARREN & PUTNAM

NEW YORK, 1931

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PRINTED IN U. S. A.

PRESS OF
BRAUNWORTH & CO., INC.
BOOK MANUFACTURERS
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

FOREWORD

This is an anthology with *direction,* concerned with the after-War spirit in European literature.

There has been, during the past few years, a veritable deluge of books about the War. Any discussion of the value of that literature would be out of place here. It is a literature destined, doubtless, to go on. It may be that we have not achieved as yet anything like a just perspective of the Great Struggle.

Meanwhile, a new generation has come up to writing maturity. This generation, the younger members of which never saw the trenches, still bears the indelible impress of the War. It has had something, if possible, even worse than war to face: namely, after-War chaos, a spiritual chaos, marked by the seeming breakdown of reality itself. A generation distinguished by its spiritual intensity and by its repudiation of pre-War aesthetics (as well as, very frequently, ante-bellum social and political systems), it has problems of its own to solve or to relegate to the unsolvable, and accordingly is, for the most part, disinterested quite in the realistic or wrathful reminiscences of the men who were at the front.

This young and disillusioned literature is beginning to loom large. In Germany, for example, there has been, noticeably since the fall of 1929, a decided turning-away from the literature of the War to that literature which may be described as *Nachkrieg,* from writers such as Remarque and Renn to Roth, Kesten, Lampel, Glaeser and their kind. There has been, there, a "revolt of the sons," the young wheeling upon the old with a bitter and despairing reproach.

In America, this conflict of generations is practically non-existent; and it is, as a result, extremely difficult for Americans as a whole to comprehend the preoccupations of young Europe. We catch vague echoes, at times, of the French Surréalistes and, vaguer still, of the Italian Novecentisti, etc.; but it all seems far-off and unreal, and comes to us, often, with a distant tinkle of the ridiculous. If such an anthology as this can bring Americans to see or to feel that there is, behind that Continental writing which may with accuracy be termed contemporary, a very real, painful and deep-rooted disorientation,

along with an equally agonized striving for readjustment and escape, it will have accomplished its major objective.

At the present moment, this purpose may be a bit easier of accomplishment than at the time the work was undertaken, thanks to that "Depression" with which America has been familiar since November, 1929. We entered the War too late and came out comparatively too unscarred to be able to feel all that Europe felt. During the past two years, however, we have had our own, an economic chastening. The extent of the spiritual change brought about by the collapse of been said, may be taken as an example of the effect of the War upon Wall Street is a question; but there would seem to be no doubt that there has been a perceptible deepening of outlook and rectification of attitude on the part of the young artist and other more sensitive elements of our national life, all of which should mean a quicker comprehension and keener sympathy for young Europe's problems.

. . . . .

It is, then, rather with the after-War than with the War generation that this *Caravan* is concerned. This does not mean that many of the writers represented were not, in one manner or another, in the War. A hard and fast demarcation here is out of the question. It is a matter of stress, and the stress is upon that spirit which has evolved since 1918. Even those who have been soldiers will seldom be found dealing with War themes. It is, rather, as has been hinted, a shattered after-War world that interests them, a world that is to be built up again or demolished utterly,—in any event, portrayed and reacted to.

A question may be raised as to why certain countries or groups have been included and others omitted. There are the Scandinavian countries on the one hand, the Balkan States on the other, which have not been given representation. These may appear to be important omissions. The Scandinavians, in particular, have contributed largely in recent years to our reading pleasure and our intellectual and aesthetic stimulus. And the Czechs and others have a literature which, if it would not be quite so readily assimilated by Americans, is none the less an impressive and an important one.

The answer is simply this. The object being to show the effect of the War upon the writing of the newer generation, the War countries were, naturally, the first selected. The only nation represented that was not in the conflict is Spain; and, spiritually, Spain was the nearest in it of any outsider; the War, for her, removed the

mental Pyrenees, made her a part of Europe. The omission of the Scandinavians, for example, has not been due merely to space considerations. These literatures have, in fact, been less affected by the War, and are more inclined to continue along traditional lines. Where they have diverged they have not taken any direction not already indicated in the literature with which this volume deals. It was decided, therefore, that it would be of greater interest and value to present a view of those countries in which the spirit and mode of writing has been obviously altered by the events of 1914-1918; while Spain at the same time, notwithstanding what has just a neutral but contiguous nation.

. . . . .

A reproof that no compiler of anthologies can hope to escape is one on the score of his inclusions and omissions, but more especially the latter; and when his collection has what most anthologies do not possess, a very specific and limiting, not always highly tangible direction, he finds his problems increased. A glimpse of the nature of these problems may tend to make the reader more lenient.

In dealing, for instance, with the after-War period, with the object of bringing out the essential, animating spirit of the period, is one to attempt to give a view of *all* the writing which has been done during the twelve years that have elapsed since the signing of the armistice; or should one, rather, confine one's attention to those writers who more truly express the newer and younger spirit of the overlapping decade? That spirit is not always an easy one upon which to lay a finger. There are certain writers with established reputations of one sort or another who are writing as they might have written if the War had never occurred; and these, obviously, whatever their individual significance, do not belong. This will explain certain omissions which, otherwise, might seem inexplicable. On the other hand, those whose mode of writing or whose content is clearly a product of a post-bellum state of intellection and of feeling, one which sometimes borders on anarchy, are evidently to be included. It is the ones in a hazy middle-ground that present the difficulty.

Take the MM. Gide and Valéry, in the French section. Are they to be included or not? Chronology, in such cases, may be of some little assistance. Inspection reveals the fact that the creative Gide, for the greater part, falls without the period, while M. Valéry practically has "come up" within it. The thing to do, from the point of chronology, would seem to be to include Valéry, while treating Gide

as a "precursor." But does M. Valéry, in spirit, form or content, "belong"? That is another question. It might appear that he stands apart from the younger men; but does he? As will be seen from the general introduction to this work, his art has been viewed, by at least a faction of *les jeunes,* as an "escape." He, therefore, from this point of view, comes within the picture.

There are, no doubt, those who would assert that, in his *Les Faux-Monnayeurs,* published in 1926, M. Gide has made his outstanding contribution, one toward a conceivable rehabilitation of the novel. This raises yet another point. *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* falls within the period, but, like M. Gide's succeeding books, has been translated into English, while of the other works that are of interest for the influence which they have had upon the young, *Les Caves du Vatican* was published the year before the War, in 1913, and *Les Nourritures terrestres* (most important of all, possibly) as far back as 1897. And *Les Caves du Vatican* has also been done into English. The question of competing with the popular rendering is, then, to be taken into consideration in connection with chronology. M. Valéry's *La Soirée avec M. Teste* dates back to 1896; the first *Variété* was published in 1924, but it has been translated, and it seems not unlikely that the second *Variété,* 1930, will be done in due time. This leaves the *Eupalinos,* 1923, to draw upon for the prose Valéry, and it has already been translated, one hears. It has seemed best, accordingly, for the purpose of the present collection, to lean to Valéry the poet, who, outside the *Vers anciens,* 1890-1900, may be said to have made his advent since 1917. As for Proust, he overlaps the period; but here again, the question of popular translation enters.

The truth is, it may be, that Proust, Gide and Valéry are all to be looked upon as forerunners rather than as figures of that generation which is our concern. Any attitude adopted in such a case must have in it no little of the arbitrary. From the point of view here taken, Gide and Proust have been assigned to the precursors, while Valéry (the poet) has been made to stand for a certain reaction against the current; although it is to be regretted that the extreme difficulty of translating the poems, a poet of high order being required for the task, has rendered it impossible to give M. Valéry the representation that is his due.

This question of "precursors" is an annoying and mildly baffling one. In Italy, there is Signor Marinetti. His *Les Mots en liberté futuristes* appeared in 1919, which would seem to bring him within

the scheme. But this was, in a way, Futurism's last expiring gasp, on the threshold of Dada and other isms to follow. Marinetti's real Futuristic activity extends from the performance of *Le Roi Bombance,* in 1909, to *Le Monoplan du Pape,* in 1914. He is now a distinguished luminary of the Fascist academy. But Signor Massimo Bontempelli, who has provided the Introduction for the Italian section, is inclined to feel that the question is an open one; and for this reason, Marinetti has been represented.

In Spain, the question comes up in connection with Azorin, a pre-War writer, there can be no doubt of that; yet, one of Señor Azorin's latest works bears the title *Superrealismo,* and there is an effort on the part of the content to live up to the young-generation title. The same problem is to be encountered in any country. There was thought on the part of the editors of having a "Precursors' Section" in each case (a thing which, for special reasons, has been done in the case of the French); but this might, very readily, expand into an anthology of precursors!

Still another question is that of age, the meaning of the word "young"—how young is young? Is it, as the French say, *"moins que trente,"* under thirty? It was found, upon investigation, that any attempt to enforce a numerical rule would tend to defeat the purpose of a Young anthology; and for this reason, no such attempt has been made. It merely may be stated, broadly, that the War generation is that which is now in or nearing its forties, and *les jeunes* the members of that generation which is treading on the heels of the other. But there is, as always, an inevitable overlapping.

There are other non-inclusions, which the reader will discover for himself, and which he may explain, if he will, by the principles laid down above. Morand the prosateur has been omitted; Morand the poet has been included. Etc., etc. The desire has been to make the English reader acquainted with a new world of young writers, many of whom are to become better and better known outside their own countries during the next few decades; and it has, therefore, been a case of *place aux jeunes.* In the French section, particularly, on account of the large number of schools and writers, it has been deemed best, by adopting a plan of historic continuity, to simplify the picture by reducing it to its essentials; which again will explain why certain writers are not there. Too many anthologies are a hash of the familiar. Our ambition, in any event, has been to bring the significant unfamiliar to America's door.

. . . . .

In connection with the compilation and editing of this *Caravan,* the editor-in-chief's thanks are due, first of all, to the writers and publishers who have so kindly permitted the use of the material included. In all the countries represented, he has encounterd an ardent interest in the project and a gratifying spirit of co-operation. As regards his personal task, his special thanks are due to Mr. Harold J. Salemson, Mr. Richard Thoma, M. André Berge, M. Jean Cocteau, M. Georges Hugnet, M. Tristan Tzara, and M. Jean de Bosschère for aid and advice in connection with the French section; to Signor Massimo Bontempelli and Signor Arturo Loria for tireless and invaluable assistance with the Italian section; to M. Jean Cassou, Señor E. Gimenez Caballero and Señor Ramon Gomez de la Serna for co-operation and encouragement in the compilation of the Spanish section; and finally, to Mr. George Reavey, Mr. J. Bronowski, Mr. Samuel Beckett, Mr. Ezra Pound, Signor Gino Saviotti, Mr. Ford Madox Ford and others for a loyalty and help that cannot be repaid with words.

The other editors have their respective debts, which they will be found to have acknowledged in the proper place. Something further has likewise been said, at the beginning of each section, as to the principles governing the choice and arrangement of material.

PARIS,
June, 1931.

S. P.

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THE AFTER-WAR SPIRIT IN LITERATURE

A General Introduction by
SAMUEL PUTNAM

morto è il Passato, e con le baionette
stiamo uccidendo il Presente
per mettere in trono il Futuro

Nino Oxilia

THE AFTER-WAR SPIRIT IN LITERATURE

I

That literature, the practitioners of which are often vaguely referred to as "the young," which has sprung up in Europe since the War, and which has not been without its effect upon America, presents to the casual beholder a bewildering set of facets. That there is an after-the-War literature sufficiently distinct for critical demarcation, no one is likely to deny. There is, even, a readily recognizable after-the-War mode of writing; and behind this mode of writing there must lie a mode or modes of thought and feeling, a view of and an attitude toward life and the world that would not, conceivably, have been the same if the War had not occurred. What is that view, that attitude; what are those intellective, emotional and, it may be added, volitional modes which, if not directly produced by the Great Struggle, certainly have left their indelible impress upon the decade that followed it?

Looking about him and reading the works of *les jeunes,* one's first impression is that of a greater or less degree of anarchy;[1] but does this creative-aesthetic anarchy, and in how far, represent an anarchy upon the moral plane? That there has been a wide-reaching and deep-searching revaluation of values is not to be doubted; and this revaluation has been and is being accomplished, not so much by those who were close up to the rain of shells,—too frequently, these were left with little more than a sense of blind and furious impotence,—but more by that generation which immediately followed the fighters. The older men, most of them now in their forties, had, it is true, something like a foreshadowing of the new spirit, a sense at least of the imminence of a new order, as in those lines of the Italian soldier-poet, Oxilia, quoted above: "The Past is dead, and

[1] See M. Paul Valéry's *"La Crise de l'Esprit,"* in the first *Variété* (1924). See, also, an article by the late D. H. Lawrence, "Chaos in Poetry," in *Échanges,* No. 1.

we are slaying the Present with bayonets, to put the Future on its throne." Before he fell, Oxilia left the refrain: *Viva, viva la vita! Viva!* The men in the trenches died thirsting for life; the new generation is doing its utmost to find life, in literature and in life.[2]

It has seemed to many that the War struck at the very bases of civilization, and that the superstructure is today tottering, if not fallen.[3] This, with the young has produced an intellectual crisis. The older ones might go on; they might go back and pick up where they had left off in 1914; they might go back to the rear-guard of Symbolism or the advance-guard of a prematurely slain Imagism; they might, like M. Paul Claudel, write charming introductions to Rimbaud—but the younger man will tell you[4] that it is a hopeless bourgeois vulgarity to make any further reference to the *"bateau ivre!"* The young demand certitude,—the certitude, in any event, of the uncertain,—and certitude is another name for faith; the smiling, the "elegant," the "pretty" and the indifferent scepticism of an Anatole France is not for them. But certitude? Where is it to be found in the world left by the War? In this world, an utter disorientation would appear to be the keynote. Jean Cocteau, facing a cosmos of unclassifiable bric-à-brac, takes refuge in the Church;[5] and whatever the refuge, whether a haven be sought or disdained, it is in a manner a universe of bric-à-brac which the writer who has come up, say, since 1920 (Cocteau, of course, dates from much further back) looks out upon and endeavors to portray, when he does endeavor to portray it—he is, as a rule, little concerned with setting it to rights.

There is, then, something "in the air." There is a vast unrest and a vast despair, but one for which it is extremely difficult to discover a common denominator.[6] There is, for one thing, a tremendous appe-

[2] War memories persist, needless to say; they will be found throughout this anthology.

[3] For one description of the spiritual effects of the War, see Alberto Consiglio's *Itinerario romantico* (Naples, 1930), particularly the section entitled *"Ragioni dell' Apocalisse,"* which has been partly translated for the Italian section of the present work.

[4] M. Louis Aragon, for example (see his *Traité du style*), and the other Surréalistes. The Surréalistes claim Rimbaud as one of their "precursors," but object to the cult, which they look upon as bourgeois, that has grown up about the poet.

[5] It is of interest to compare Giovanni Papini's flight from a world of conflicting "minds."

[6] *Notre Inquiétude,* Daniel Rops, 1929. The author speaks of the *"Hamletisme"* of the age (on which, compare M. Valéry). The period of after-the-War unrest may be definitely dated from the year 1916. It was

tite, which, with the widening of the field of choice, brings on its own paralysis. How choose from amid all the infinite possibilities of doing, knowing and feeling,—the seemingly boundless possibilities of freedom? (Compare William James' "possible Me's.") How resign one's self to the arduous necessity of choice, a necessity, as with André Gide of an older generation, that is implied in action, action becoming thus a limitation? Others feel anything but a sense of freedom. To the young Frenchman, the habit of freedom, become a memory, causes the American by contrast to appear a free being. The result is, if he cannot have freedom, he would conquer the illusion, an illusion of freedom and of power. The thing for which he is looking is a way out; his one desire is evasion, escape, a sort of Huysmansesque *"hors du monde, n'importe où."* This will explain the passion, one which the average American or the normal-going citizen anywhere will find difficult to understand, for the *"acte gratuit,"* some action which shall assert one's power of doing, of choosing, as when, in the *Caves du Vatican,* Gide's Lafcadio, for no other reason, pushes an innocent victim out the door of a railway carriage.

Impotence, one way or another, it is that. The German Remarque has given a revealing interview. A combatant who knew only the last years of fighting, he confesses that he merely has transferred his own feeling of impotence in confrontation with life to the subject of war; in which respect, he stands in some contrast with the objective Renn. What we have is a certain apotheosis of unrest, as an end in itself, or, according to Marcel Arland, author of a three-volume war novel, a new *mal du siècle.*[7] This new *mal du siècle,* however, is not precisely the same as the one that Baudelaire knew; it differs from that of either the Romantics or the Decadents, although its victims, if anything, are more akin to the latter than to the former. A plausible attempt has been made to connect the new *Weltschmerz* with an older *Sturm und Drang,* and to trace the whole back to early German philosophic idealism. Signor Francesco Flora, for one, has

in that year that Walter Hasenclever's play, *Der Sohn,* the beginning of what the Germans know as "the revolt of the Sons," was produced; it was in that year that Dada really started; etc. "The drama," says Alberto Consiglio, "is in our own minds; the decent thing is to subdue it by expressing it." (See a review of Consiglio by Giansiro Ferrata, in *Solaria,* January, 1930, pp. 53ff.)

[7] Article in *La Nouvelle Revue Française,* February, 1924. See the French section, following.

made the effort; but there still remains a difference between the two. The new is anti-lyrical; it lacks the Romantic's release of tears; it is, in short, marked by what the French term *sécheresse.* Any one who would get the difference has but to read such a book as Drieu La Rochelle's *Le Jeune Européen* and contrast the author's attitude with that of Lord Byron or Alfred de Musset.

How is one to bring some kind of critical order out of this apparent chaos? The modern attitude is always a complex and often, in appearance, an incoherent one. Is there some logical concatenation of tendencies, one reflective of what might be called the collective soul of the epoch? A case in point is that auctorial "unintelligibility" which is one of the most persistent of the reproaches hurled at the young writer of today. A business man is to be heard speaking disdainfully of a volume "parts of which even the most erudite persons find it impossible to understand." Is there something that can bring such a reader to see the reason for this? What is wanted is not one of the patented quick guides to culture, but a sincere attempt at a rapprochement.[8] The difficulty is, the young writer is inclined to scorn any such unbending, superciliousness being a part of his attitude, if not of his creed. Such a gesture from the extreme Left is, it may be, a trifle too much to expect; but there is a certain middle ground, however much the inexorable Left may contemn it, from which something at once intelligent and intelligible may be said; and it is from this "extreme center," as he describes it, that M. André Berge addresses us in his *L'Esprit de la Littérature moderne,*[9] which is, perhaps, the first wholly sympathetic and satisfactory effort to gather up the manifold tangled threads of after-the-War modernity as embodied in the art of writing.[10]

II

Everything depends upon the critic and his approach. *Les jeunes,* for the most part, decline to hold any brief for themselves. They are even content to let their "sincerity" be challenged, and to bear the

[8] Such an attempt has been made by a French scholar, M. Émile Bouvier (*Initiation à la Littérature d'aujourd'hui,* 1927). M. Bouvier genially observes that he would rather be "elementary than esoteric (*hermétique*)."

[9] Paris, 1930.

[10] Too often, the "critic" of the newer literature is like the American reviewer of the English translation of Joseph Delteil's *Sur le fleuve Amour*: "What is one to say of a book that comes bound in black oilcloth and the title of which is a pun?"

reproach of "cynicism" or any other that may be tossed in their direction. To them, the old judicial criticism simply cannot be made to apply. Let the critic don the robes of a judge, and he will hear no evidence. But this criticism is rapidly passing, if it is not already a thing of the past, even though we do hear M. Henri Massis calling for a return to the ermine, and for the restitution of "reason" and the "level head."[11] The newer type of critic, like M. Berge, is not a judge but a confidant; he is one who looks beneath the wilful cynical veneer and discovers a "purity," in the form of a fundamental intellectual honesty. He knows that, with the young, tendency is more important than accomplishment, what they mean to do or would like to do than what they may be doing or may have done.[12] Not only that, he is willing to permit the young to lay down their own laws; and one of those laws, according to Massimo Bontempelli, leader of the Italian Novecentisti, or Twentieth Century Group, is that there is no law in judging artistic results; each work of art, like each individual, is to be judged *in itself*; in which is to be seen an aftermath of Croce.[13]

There could be no better plea for understanding than that made by a before-the-War leader of the young, one who died in hospital the day before the Armistice was signed, Guillaume Apollinaire:

Soyez indulgents quand vous nous comparez
A ceux qui furent la perfection de l'ordre.
Nous qui quêtons partout l'aventure,
Nous ne sommes pas vos ennemis.
Nous voulons vous donner de vastes et d'étranges domaines
Où le mystère en fleur s'offre à qui veut le cueillir.

[11] Preface to *Où va la Critique?* Maurice Rouzaud, 1929.

[12] The modern stress is on tendency. In painting, compare André Lhote's remark, to the effect that "not good painting so much as tendency interests me." Compare, also, the *"placement par tendance,"* or hanging of exhibitions in accordance with tendencies represented, that is practiced by the new Surindépendant group.

[13] The influence of Croce has been both profound and widely diffused. Among his countrymen, a generation has been affected by the *Filosofia dello spirito* (1908–09). True, there is now a reaction on the part of the *giovani* against Croce, and the assertion is to be heard that the latter has nothing to say to the young writers of today. Nevertheless, his influence lasts, and is to be found so far from home as Russia; compare Alexei Tolstoy's *Response to the Resolution of the R. C. P.* (Russian section, following): "It is impossible to discuss the methods of art, for the reason that each new work of art is the method."

Il y a là des feux nouveaux des couleurs jamais vues
Mille phantasmes impondérables
Auxquels il faut donner de la réalité.
Nous voulons explorer la beauté contrée énorme où tout se tait.
Il y a aussi le temps qu'on peut chasser et faire revenir.
Pitié pour nous qui combattons toujours aux frontières
De l'illimité et de l'avenir
Pitié pour nos erreurs, pitié pour nos péchés.[14]

Be forebearing when you compare us
With those who were the perfection of order.
We who everywhere seek adventure,
We are not your enemies.
We would give you vast and strange domains
Where flowering mystery waits for him would pluck it.
There are new flames and colors never glimpsed
A myriad bodiless phantoms
On which we must confer reality.
We would explore beauty, enormous silent land.
There is a season for the hunt and for the huntsman's return.
Have compassion on us who are always fighting on the frontiers
Of the boundless future,
Compassion for our errors, compassion for our sins.

Apollinaire, somewhat unfortunately, is no longer the fashion; he is no longer *"chic,"* [15] and indeed, he has fallen into profane hands. Nevertheless,—the August, 1914, number (significant date!) of *Les Soirées de Paris* lies open before me—he was the animating spirit of that modernity which, transformed by the War, he might have difficulty at times in recognizing. Was it not he who coined the word *Surréalisme* (following Huysmans' *Supranaturisme;* see the second chapter of *Là-Bas*)? But where, and this is the difference in generations, Apollinaire pleaded for toleration, the after-the-War youth scorns the plea. He must be understood, if understood at all, in spite of himself; and this is very much the feat that M. Berge has performed.

It was some years ago that the writer last mentioned, as the editor of *Les Cashiers du Mois,* conducted one of those *"enquêtes,"* or

[14] *Les Ecrits nouveaux,* published in December, 1920, p. 54.

[15] Parisian literary argot. Any one who has followed young French writing since the War is aware that fashion plays a considerable rôle.

symposiums, of which the French are so fond. This particular *"enquête"* was addressed to young writers, and had to do with their outlook upon life and upon the business of writing. The result, published under the significant title of *Examen de Conscience,* is one of the documents, and should become one of the archives, of after-the-War literature. The collected responses were remarkable for their intense and burning sincerity, for their truly confessional air. They were remarkable, above all, for the revealed attitude of the respondents toward what is known as literature. Life, it appeared, was so much more important; as Rimbaud once had exclaimed, *"Prends l' éloquence et tords son cou,"* so these men whose trade was writing seemed to be saying, "Take literature and wring its neck!"[16] The truth is, the War had made the writer self-conscious; it had made him feel the necessity of justifying his own existence.

It is, accordingly, by his own attitude that we are justified in approaching the after-the-War writer from the side of life, that is to say, from the human and the psychologic side.

III

Each century, remarks Bontempelli, has a character of its own. The observation, doubtless, had been made before him; but to the young (Bontempelli, as a matter of fact, is forty-six), each truth achieved is a discovery. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the present century would appear to be its insistence upon the fact of youth, whether physical or technical. Certain older critics,[17] it is true, believe that much of the youth we think we know is an illusion, that we chance to be passing through a rude, primitive, "young" cycle, but that there is, in reality, too much of age in our souls, too much of antiquity and senility, breeding cynicism and a sceptical posture, to permit of our being young.

However this may be, the stress of the Novecentisto, by way of

[16] Dada started out by declaring itself to be "anti-painting, anti-music, anti-literature." Note the sarcastic title, *"Littérature,"* which the Dadaists took for their review. The word was filched from Valéry, apparently with his connivance. This same review (1919–20) had conducted an interesting *enquête,* the burden of which was, "Why do you write?" (Compare the swan number of *The Little Review.*)—"Henceforward," says Louis Aragon, "poetry pledges man to life; and our interest is nil in him who never has ventured even to draw near the brink of that abyss to which Rimbaud inevitably leads."

[17] For example, Camillo Pellizzi, *Le Lettere italiane del nostro secolo,* 1929.

instance, upon a radical differentiation of the Twentieth century in its first quarter from the century that went before is found, upon investigation, to be fairly justified. The Nineteenth century, we are told, ended in 1914, and the Twentieth began "some time after the War." Our aesthetic chronology as a whole is subjected to a strenuous revision, with a Classic era prior to Christ, a Romantic era extending from the Sermon on the Mount "to the Ballets Russes," and a new post-bellum age, marked by a revolt against the naturalism, the aestheticism, the psychological analysis, the "petit-bourgeois taste" and the "false humanitarianism" of the last hundred years of the preceding epoch.[18] Psychology and aestheticism, in particular, are the "twin microbes" to be combatted.[19] As for beauty, its epitaph is read by Signor Bontempelli.[20] There is a revolt against the "lyric minute" of Romanticism, a revolt against the Romantic's words as well as his tears;[21] but there is, at the same time, a reaction from the before-the-War *avant-garde,* with its vague talk of "sensitiveness" (*sensibilité*), "dynamism," "reality," etc.[22] Contemporary youth prides itself upon its seriousness and upon its confusions, upon the seriousness of its confusions, with the pain of living balanced by the fear of dying, the need of believing by the habit of doubt (a new version of *C'est la faute à Voltaire*), and a taste for not believing by the desire to dare to believe in one's unbelief. These confusions occasionally will be found embodied in one work or in one created personality, as in the case of Giuseppe Antonio Borgese's *Rubè.*[23] Such characteristics, it may be seen, are not those of the young

[18] See Consiglio, op. cit., Note 3 above, p. 102. The problem of differentiation between the centuries, Ottocento and Novecento, is a very real one for the contemporary Italian.

[19] See Joseph Delteil, in the French section following, on "Aesthetes and Angels."

[20] See the Critics and Essayists portion of the Italian section, following. On beauty and the *"valeurs de choc,"* compare M. Valéry's Introduction to Leo Ferrero's *Leonardo, o dell' arte,* pp. 19ff.

[21] Compare what Mr. Bronowski, in his Introduction to the English and Irish section, following, has to say regarding the "cynical deterioration" of modern poetry (Eliot, Pound and others). Signor Giuseppe Ravegnani, in his *I Contemporanei* (1930), asserts: "The whole of our literature, prose and poetry, from D'Annunzio to the present time, is a negative elaboration of a romantic *ars poetica*" (op. cit., p. 306). Read Alberto Spaini on D'Annunzio, in the Critics and Essayists portion of the Italian section, following.

[22] On the contradictory character of the before-the-War mentality, see Valéry, *Variété* I, p. 18.

[23] A novel, published in 1921, accessible in English translation.

intellectual prior to 1914, with his repressed sentimentality, his unpersuaded scepticism and a dream-like nostalgia hovering over all.

It might seem that the trend has been a downward one; but there is, M. Berge assures us, a rebound to the stars. No little of the appearance of evil comes from the attempt at a forthright break with tradition. If the actual break is not as abrupt a one as it is proclaimed to be,[24] it is, still, startlingly pronounced. Where the before-the-War aesthete (see André Salmon's *L'Art vivant*) liked to speak of the new art as being a "prolongation" of tradition, his successor of today would throw all tradition overboard. He rejects all words, formulas and limitations; he will listen to no talk of an *"esprit français"* or any other *esprit* except his own; his object is *"ne pas se laisser duper."* He is opposed to the transcendental and to all absolutes; and this, as M. Jacques Rivière has pointed out,[25] is one of the traits that distinguish him from the Romantic of old. For the transcendental, he would substitute the immanent, and find a psychological (despite his revolt against Nineteenth-century psychology) in place of a metaphysical unity. He is animated by a spirit of quest that leaves him no peace. He loves life, but he loves it in much the same fashion as did Job and Schopenhauer. He will dispense with any sort of unity, if needs be,—he has been, very largely, forced to dispense with it,—and he may be heard declaring, "Only the accidental interests us."

All this has not been without its social causes. There has been a certain hardening of the social arteries, there is an obvious mechanistic trend in contemporary society, and these are forces that go to produce a systematic aridity, an aridity that attains a high degree of visibility in certain Italians, among whom may be mentioned

[24] Compare the statement of Mr. Reavey, Introduction to the Russian section, following: "The new does not occur more than once or twice in one or two thousand years." Manifestoes, Mr. Reavey goes on to point out, are not to be taken at their own valuation. He is speaking of the Russian Futurist manifesto, signed by Mayakowsky, Bourliuk and Khlebnikov, which condemned the entire past in favor of the "living word." An interesting bit of dialogue will be found in Boris Pilynak's story, "With Irina's Eyes" (Russian section, following): "Only the strong and the free shall remain." —"That was said by Darwin."—"To the devil! It was I who said it!" See, also, what M. Berge (Introduction to the French section) has to say on the break with tradition and a "subterranean" continuity of tradition. M. Berge will be found to stress the changes in the French educational system that took place in the year 1902.

[25] *La Nouvelle Revue Française,* February, 1924. See the French section, following.

Arturo Onofri, Corrado Govoni, Camillo Sbarbaro, Emilio Cecchi (though he is redeemed by lyricism) and Borgese. With writers of this type, faith and hope are gone, and charity is clung to despairingly. Finding it impossible to attain to faith, the doubter seeks the certainty of his doubt. More or less indifferent alike to internal and external reality, he is conscious of but one need, the need of expression in the eternal moment. Expression, no longer perfection, is the thing.[26] This has a decidedly unsocial, not to say inhuman ring; yet, curiously enough, the new literature seeks to be more human than the old.

To begin with, the doctrine of art for art's sake is dead.[27] Mr. Clive Bell, with his "significant form" and his fine aesthetic tremor, was, perhaps, its expiring gasp. The art of the young century aims at being popular "in a modern sense." It aims at being, first of all, interesting, exciting, amusing; and the old popular theatre, now defunct, the cinema (but not the *avant-garde variety*) and the Nick Carter or detective thriller[28] are its models, while American jazz, with its high-strung emotive tension, taps out the beat. Its appeal is to the uncultivated, even the illiterate and the foreign reader, the sort of reader who turns to the back of the book "to see how it ends." The cult of beauty, as has been said, is done away with; beauty is too feminine in an age of virile ugliness; in place of it, we are to have something resembling a new Homeric age, with the creation of myths, of fables and of legends as the objective of the poet, who is thereby restored to his primitive etymological rights as a *maker*.[29]

The art-work, in short, is no longer regarded as a subject; it has become an object. We will create, says the Novecentist, objects destined to live outside ourselves, and so, change the world. This escape into an expressionistic objectivity is especially visible in Germany, where a *neue Sachlichkeit*, or New Reality, is being sought in the impersonality of things. Paul Fechter[30] is the prophet here. The

[26] Valéry, Introduction to *Leonardo, o dell' arte,* pp. 19ff.

[27] Proclaimed by the late Jacques Rivière, article cited, Note 25.

[28] See Philippe Soupault's story, "The Death of Nick Carter," in the French section, following. The Novecentisti are inclined to look upon Dumas père as a precursor. (In spite of their heralded "break with tradition," the young, it will be noticed, are unable to resist the temptation to seek out forbears.)

[29] One of the Novecentist group, G. Gaspare Napolitano, has applied this myth-making theory to the fairy tale: see his *La Scoperta dell' America,* 1929.

[30] *Deutsche Dichtung der Gegenwart.*

doctrine as elaborated holds certain contradictions, as well as elements of romanticism and of sensationalism, as has been pointed out by its critics;[31] but it has, none the less, a contemporary significance.

The very modern writer has no faith in literature, lyrism or the word, but, in opposition to that renewed quest of pure form inspired by early-century Croceanism, would build for himself a doctrine of *contenutismo*, calling for a content that is modern at all costs, modern by program,—for the advanced effort of the day is nothing if not *"horriblement tendancieux."*[32] These tendencies are, possibly, verbally more stressed in Italy, where a number of non-purely-artistic influences are to be encountered in the modern theatre, along with a general reflection of after-War disorientation. They are not confined to Italy, however, and in such semi-popular, semi-"advanced" periodicals as *Der Querschnitt* and *Variétés* may be seen an attempt at bringing art and life together.

The Italians of the moment, being extremists, have carried this doctrine to a point which many will look upon as a reduction to an absurdity. The test of a work of art, announced Massimo Bontempelli some years ago, is its translatability; and so, in founding his review, "900," he decided to publish not in Italian but in French.[33] This would shut out the stylist, the writer with the handsome rounded periods and the well-turned phrase, and would put the emphasis where it belonged, on invention.[34] For the Novecentist, hating the *word*,[35] hates the man of letters, the "pseudo-man" and "anti-poet." Poet, writer, man of letters: such, he will tell you, is the downward slope. It is away from style and back to drama,—back,

[31] Particularly, by Joseph Roth and Rudolph Kayser. For example, Herr Fechter sees an alternative escape in that highly personal reality achieved by certain individuals who look out upon the world through the lens of their own egos; but Herr Kayser draws attention to the fact that, as faith in the ego grows, faith in things is likely to decrease.

[32] The phrase (*horriblement tendancieuse"*) is Bontempelli's, applied to the then prospective Novecentist review, "900."

[33] Four quarterly numbers were published in French (beginning with the Autumn of 1926), and then the magazine, probably for politic reasons, went back to Italian.

[34] "Fine writing" remains something of a vice with the Italian; examples of it will be found in the Italian section of the present work.

[35] See Bontempelli's *"Conseils"* at the front of the second number of "900." Contrast the attitude of the "word-revolutionist" (chiefly English-speaking and under the influence of Joyce on the one hand and French *Surréalisme* on the other) who finds an escape from the slavery of words by playing with and transforming—"revolutionizing"—them.

for certain of the young, to Dostoievski.[36] The quintessence of the art of writing is the cinema; the conception and not the means is important. Writing is not an art of words, but an art of things and facts. Language in itself is beneath discussion: "The only intelligent questions are those having to do with thought and the imagination."[37]

This ultra-objectivity has its perils. In Germany, it has tended to degenerate into *reportage,* a *reportage* borrowed partly from the Russians and partly from the Americans, and representing, one might say, a combination of Russian collectivism and American dynamism. The writer here sees life and reports events under their more ephemeral and fleeting aspect, rather than *sub specie aeternitatis*. But voices have already been raised in protest, and we hear Alfred Döblin urging that the author put himself back into his work and throw aside the mask of *reportage.*

On the whole, however, the insistence is that the critic consider ideas and feeling, not form. Whether the leaning be to verbal music, as with the late-Joyceans and some of the Russian word-patternists, or to verbal architecture, as with the Italian Novecentisti, there is a vast contempt for all purisms and for the "problem of art" as that problem once was understood.

IV

The very word, "modernity," the modernist will tell us, has come to take on a new content; and this has been due, in no small degree, to the new mathematics and the new philosophy of time and space. Bergson and Einstein have exerted an incalculable influence over the young literature, and the atom, the molecule have become subjects of literary importance. It might almost be said that the young European feels himself to be a lost being, lost in space and in time. Time to him is something sacred, the most mysterious of essences, possibly the most recognizable image of God; and the one great sin is anything that deceives man as to the true nature of time, that is, as to its duration. And hence it is, as M. Berge observes, that we find modern literature definitely taking up a position *in the time-stream.*

This brings with it a new attitude toward literary immortality, an attitude which must be somewhat like that of the builders of the

[36] This tendency has been given expression by certain members of the group about the young Florentine review, *Solaria.*

[37] See "900," No. 2, p. 169.

pyramids. The after-War writer is quite careless as to whether or not he will last; and in this respect, he differs from an older writer, even though in many other ways a precursor, like Gide. This carelessness of immortality will account for the transient character of the language that is frequently employed, the use of argot, etc. The Novecentisti are to be heard shouting for the anonymity of the artist, the legend-builder and myth-creator. Art, from now on, is to be "applied art," in an exact sense of the term, and the artist is to be a craftsman endowed with a medieval humility. There are to be, as a corollary, no more masterpieces,—none, except collective ones, like the Gothic cathedrals. For the artist who is distinctively of today lives and builds in the moment, and in that moment finds eternity.

The moment is the soul of reality, the new absolute; and art, in many cases, shows a tendency to become a cult of the instant, what the Italians term *instantaneità.* This worship of the moment confers upon the artist, often, the appearance of an acrobat, as with Jean Cocteau, Ramon Gomez de la Serna and Orio Vergani.[38] Such writers endeavor to give us the impression of the moment in fields whither they have been led by their own instability. The frequency with which the figure of the tight-rope-walker occurs in the pages of Cocteau is illuminating. The author of *Le Grand Écart,* it is not to be forgotten, in a manner of speaking grew up with Picasso, and would appear to have imbibed something of that playboy spirit which undoubtedly was in Cubism.[39] Much of the same spirit is to be found in the work left by Guillaume Apollinaire, but it was not until after the War that it came to fruition. On this side, the advanced literary art of the day, an art viewed as *risk,* may be said to have its affinities with jazz, the essence of which is a sense of tension and of imminent danger. "The rule of life and of art," says Bontempelli, "for the next hundred years: to find adventure in every instant, up to the moment when one either becomes a constellation or crumbles into bits." (Such is that "Mediterranean music" which, according to the intending founder of a European art that shall be a prolongation of Mediterranean culture, is to be born to the barbaric strains of trombone and saxophone.)

It is not strange if, with such a view behind it, the writing of the after-War decade has a prevailing fragmentary character. The frag-

[38] Compare Marinetti's *Manifesto:* "Heroism and clowning in art and in life." (See Italian section, following.)

[39] A treatise remains to be written on the *blague* in modern art. Cocteau could do it, if he would.

ment has seemed to be the expression, and an apotheosis of this tendency is, possibly, to be seen in Joyce's *Work in Progress.* In France, there is Cocteau, whose predilection for the fragment is to be seen even in those "itemized" photographs (nose, ears, eyes, hands, etc.) which he is fond of having taken of himself. Signor Bontempelli has spoken [40] of the fragmentary quality of the Italian "interlude"; and this fragmentariness, M. Benjamin Crémieux [41] assures us, persists today.

For the young literature, to repeat, is in the time-stream, what Alexei Tolstoy alludes to as "the flow of contemporaneity." This means that the view of art held is a dynamic rather than a static one, with a Bergsonian flux replacing the old "arrested motion." The work of art itself has become a stream, and tends, according to M. Berge (though Bontempelli would disagree) to approach the art of music, or more accurately, that visual symphonic form which is to be discovered in the cinema. The influence of the cinema is another highly important one. Its effect upon the novel alone, sometimes by way of release and sometimes through suggested technique, has been considerable, as may be seen in connection with Gide's *Les Faux-Monnayeurs.*[42] It is easy, among other things, to trace the relation between the motion-picture throwback and the interior monologue, that internal cinematographic music which is both a result and a cause of jazz-age tension.

No, the art of the decade is nothing if not relativist. Take the Italian theatre. The *"grottesco,"* Signor Pellizzi notes,[43] fulfills Adriano Tilgher's concept of a *"teatro della relatività,"* with its play of reality and the imagination, of will and the belief in will, of feeling and the illusion of feeling; while Pirandello's rather primary symbolism [44] tends to objectify and to render real the alternatives of thought, the terms of a constant antithesis.[45] The intimate, intellec-

[40] See his Introduction to the Italian section, following.

[41] *Panorama de la littérature italienne contemporaine,* 1928.

[42] M. Gide has much to say of the "pure novel." Following the French *"poésie pure,"* there has been a good deal of talk about "purifying" the various arts.

[43] Op. cit., Note 17.

[44] This was the point of a bitter attack on the Italian dramatist by the Parisian critic, Fernand Vanderem. A spirited controversy followed, in which M. Crémieux took Signor Pirandello's side.

[45] Pirandello's academic background—he took his doctor's degree in Germany—is not to be overlooked; see his treatises, *L'Umorismo* and *Arte e scienza* (both published in 1908).

tual, psychologic character of this playhouse is to be seen in the work of such men as Chiarelli, Antonelli, Bonelli (in dramatists, too, such as Vergani and Alberto Cecchi) and such a piece as Bontempelli's *Nostra dea* (1925).

In Russia, we have Andrei Biely and his "syncretic panoramas." Biely arose to protest against an effort on the part of the revolutionary populists to introduce the "sober principles of a falsely classical realism, at a time when Einstein had destroyed such realism." He further proclaimed that "The static of present forms will be broken; the 'form in motion' will replace the 'form at rest'; and there will no longer be novels, poems, stories or dramas in our sense of the word; there will be syncretic panoramas; the *byt* (life of the people), as we understand it, will disappear."[46] The old forms, in brief, were to be replaced by "syncretic apprehensions."

The aspiration toward music may be a feminine one, as the Novecentist would have us believe, and the latter may choose to bend his efforts in the direction of "the virile laws of architecture," in an age marked, if not by an overlapping, by a decided interreaction of the arts. Nevertheless, music and the cinema would appear to be the best analogies; and in this regard, the young Frenchman, being a bit closer to Bergson, is more typical of the dominant spirit than is his correspondent beyond the Alps, who may be a bit too close up to Mussolini.

V

It is not alone mathematics and the Twentieth-century philosophy of time and space that have shaped perceptibly the course of young European writing. There is also Freud and, following Freud, the modern medical stress on the dream. The young writer may have his occasional sneer for "scientific superstition," but the tendency today is to bring science and literature into contact, and to employ literature as an implement, as an instrument of investigation. In this, it might seem that the contemporary artist is treading in the footsteps of Zola and those other Nineteenth-century realists whom he professes to despise, who likewise strove to put the science and the philosophy of their day (how much of it is left!) into the work of art. However this may be, he is extremely sensitive both to science and to philosophy. As for the latter, he may tell you at one moment that she is an impotent old woman, but at the next moment, he will

[46] See Mr. Reavey's Introduction to the Russian section, following.

be insisting upon the essentially speculative and philosophic basis of his creed. His view of philosophy as a sterile handmaiden comes from his discovery that a number of the old philosophic principles have broken down completely, threatening the cohesion of the cosmos that surrounds him. He has discovered, for instance, that the old axiom, *Natura non facit saltus,* is not invariably true. This may elate him, but it presents him, at the same time, with a great and devastating suspicion. The old philosophers having nothing to offer, he turns to the new, to Einstein and Bergson, to Planck and Meyerson and, on the psychologic side, to Freud. His central tenet is that of the primacy of sensation; and here, while looking for literary ancestors and going back to Gide's *Nourritures terrestres* (1897),—that insurrection of the individual heralded by Gide, Péguy and Suarès has not been without its effect,—he comes upon a metaphysician precursor in Joseph Baruzi,[47] and he is also indebted to the researches of Janet in psychologic automatism. He draws for further sustenance upon modern sociologists, such as Durkheim and Levy-Bruhl, and finds an inspiration toward a sense of the body collective in Jules Romains and the Unanimist (Abbaye) group. As a rule, he is inclined to revolt against such Nineteenth-century thinkers as Taine, Spencer and Marx; but they are not the only ones to stir his contempt,[48] for his art is sometimes announced as a revolt against "the stupidity of the century"—meaning, his own. The influence of Nietzsche and of Georges Sorel, on the other hand, is a lasting one.

If it is literary forbears that are being sought, there are enough of them to be found. There is Alfred de Vigny, who, in the Preface to his *Poèmes antiques et modernes,* 1827, boasts of having *"mis en scène une pensée philosophique sous une forme épique ou dramatique."* [49] There is Baudelaire, and his *Correspondances.* One may even go as far back as Rabelais' famous "bone," or "substantific marrow." [50] Coming down, one meets with Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Laforgue, all of whom have undergone something of a resurrection. The Surréalistes have their own Isidore Ducasse, or the "Comte de Lautréamont," while the Dadaists—and the Surréalistes

[47] *La Volonté de metamorphose,* 1911.—The influence, also, of Whitehead, Alexander, Jeans, Eddington and others is not to be overlooked.

[48] "The Stupid Nineteenth Century" of M. Leon Daudet.

[49] M. Bouvier (see Note 8) makes a good deal of this point. Op. cit., pp. 22ff.

[50] Ibid., p. 31.

as well, as a matter of fact,—may trace their descent from the picturesque Jacques Vaché, of whom more will be said later. Some would see the beginning of the modern movement in France in the launching of Jean Royère's review, *La Phalange,* in 1906, the poets gathered about this organ being the descendants lineal of Mallarmé and Symbolism. There are yet other names: Charles Cros, friend of Verlaine and of Rimbaud; Germain Nouveau; Alfred Jarry, the author of *Ubu roi* (1888-1896), a work little known outside of France that has had a very wide influence; the literary Cubists, Apollinaire, Salmon, Jacob; Gustave Kahn (credited with the origination of free verse) ; etc. There are, in addition, certain figures, such as the Flemish Jean de Bosschère, author of *Béâle-Gryne,* 1909, and *Dolorine et les ombres,* 1911, of whom it would be rather difficult to say at times whether they are belated Symbolists or true precursors of *Surréalisme.*[51] The line of descent, indeed, is very clear: Symbolism; Cubism; Futurism; Póésie pure; Dadaism; Superrealism.

If, in this Introduction and by other writers, the literature of a continent is so frequently spoken of in terms of French literature, it is for the reason that Franc's historic rôle is that of "hostess," as M. Valéry Larbaud has put it, in the "European conversation." But there are certain figures that loom above any boundary-lines. There are certain poets,—Blake, Hölderlin, Leopardi,[52] Rilke,[53]—who are by way of being the ancestors of today. But for the young Frenchman, and for many writers outside of France, there are two names which, whenever the subject comes up, must be mentioned at once. Those are the names of Gide and Proust.

In French literature and that literature which has felt the influence of the French, Proust and Gide are the forerunners, the fountainheads of the two main streams: Proust, who says: *"L'Art recompose*

[51] See "The Precursors" in the French section, following. Bosschère's early works (the two mentioned) have been translated into Russian. For the Bosschèrean influence upon poetry in English, and especially upon the work of Mr. T. S. Eliot, see M. René Taupin's *L'Influence du symbolisme français sur la poésie américaine;* see, in particular, pp. 219–20 and 233.

[52] Leopardi, by the Italian of today, is associated with the French Baudelaire; Rimbaud and Mallarmé in the same ancestral gallery.

[53] The Viennese poet has had a profound effect upon European literature. The *Cahier de Malte Laurids Brigge* has been a sort of Bible to the French: see the *Reconnaissance à Rilke,* published in 1926.—As to poet-precursors, Signor Giuseppe Ungaretti, the Italian poet would list Blake, Hölderlin, Leopardi and Lautréamont.

exactement la Vie," and Gide, with his *"Le génie du roman fait vivre le possible, non pas le réel."* To reconstruct with exactitude the panorama of life, through a *recherche du temps perdu;* to make the possible come alive, which is Gide's attempt in *Les Faux-Monnayeurs.* M. Berge, in his book, excellently differentiates the tendencies represented by these two writers. The Proust tendency he describes as "intellectual," the Gide as "affective." Proust, on the surface, appears to be primarily concerned with *sensibilité,* but it is intelligence that remains the motivating force in the end; the author seeks to understand that which he feels. This may be termed a realistic tendency, inasmuch as it would put art at the service of life, or rather, of reality. With Gide, on the contrary, it is the play of the intelligence over the surface that creates the first impression, and the author's attitude would seem to be almost the outworn one of art for art's sake; but upon closer inspection, we find that if the author is interested in ideas, he is concerned with them in so far as they affect the sensitive apparatus of man; it is the movements of the *moi* that hold him fascinated.

The contrast may be carried, and M. Berge does carry it, further still. Proust is looking always at life, Gide at the human soul within. The former proceeds, or likes to proceed, from the particular sensation to the intellectual and universal law. Proust is an observer, whose characters seek reality within themselves, whereas Gide is attracted by the gesture, and from the gesture goes inward and downward. Both writers, and this is a point which the French critic does not make with sufficient clarity, have a certain relation to life and the inner man. Gide probably comes the closer to life, for the reason that his tendency is affective, while the Proust tendency may be taken as standing for art and order in the expressive formulation of the real. As to actual "influence" exerted, it is not easy always to make a distinction; Gide's influence is, probably, the dominating one among his countrymen, but the Proust influence is, if not the deeper one, more widely diffused abroad. If the Gide influence is more strongly felt, it is for the reason that the youngest writers are little concerned with Proustian psychologizings. The gesture holds for them a greater interest; and if they explore the dream with Herr Freud as a guide, it is that they may discover a new and super reality.

Yet, the influence of Proust is not, by any means, to be underestimated. Proust brought in a new optic reality, a new fashion of seeing. This is the desire of the young European of today, to what-

ever nation he may chance to belong: to renew his vision of the world. It is what Joseph Delteil did in France; it is what Benjamin Jarnès is doing in Spain. Read the Preface to the latter's *Paula y Paulita;*[54] it is in the nature of a manifesto. So viewed, the world is not the same; the very notion of reality undergoes a change, and a new classification is needed. There creeps in at times a sort of renovated animism and a new black magic of things, of the object.[55] The human being is an organism, and it is the external shock to the organism that counts. As Jarnès phrases it, it is from the outbreak of hostilities between the artist and the world that the work of art springs and "a new life begins." Emotion, as the term has been understood in the past, practically disappears; the primacy is to sensation; it is a case of *sensibilité* versus *sentiment,* the artist's business being to open up a path, through sensation, to a new and mystic feeling.[56]

It was back in the last century—his voice comes to us with a strange and far-off sound—that Maupassant wrote, in the Preface to *Pierre et Jean:* "An intelligent critic ought to look for everything that is the least like those novels that have already been done, and to do all he can to spur on the young to try out new paths."[57] This spurring-on has been accomplished, in no small part, by Gide and Proust, more deliberately by the former, more unconsciously by the latter.

Besides these personal influences, there are other, impersonal ones. One of these is "Americanism." The Futurists discovered America's mechanistic civilization; their successors are discovering our country's "spiritual virginity," and are finding an Homeric quality in our modes of emotion and of expression. But Americanism is only a phase. The modern, Bontempelli asserts, is the offspring of an antithesis, between the ultra-rational, extra-substantial spirit of Cubism and the ultra-illogical, extra-fluid soul of Futurism; the thing is to react against both.

VI

Something has been said of a "new vision of the world." What we have is not merely a new vision, the striving for such a vision,

[54] See the Spanish section, following.

[55] That disreputable old philosopher, Saint Martin, or a modern theosophist like Ouspensky might be interested here.

[56] On the theory of "shock," compare Delteil's *Sur le fleuve Amour.* The doctrine of sensation is summed up in the same author's *Les cinq Sens.*

[57] Compare M. Valéry, the first *Variété,* p. 15.

but an attempt at the creation of a novel and magic universe.[58] The material lies close at hand. Strangely enough, it was not spiritually an impoverished world, but a richer and fuller one, one with a cinematographic wealth of movement, that awaited the young European at the close of the War. Take the case of the young Frenchman. During the War, as M. Berge reminds us, he had seen Hindu, Australian, Senegalese and other exotic legions humdrumly quartered in the departments of the Somme and the Pas-de-Calais; the far-away and the unreal had been brought to his door; it was Central Europe that became for him a mysterious and forbidden land. There was, following the signing of the Armistice, a next-door neighbor to become acquainted with all over again, and the process of becoming once more acquainted was rendered all the more thrilling by the sense of a latent hostility in the air, the difficulty of passports, etc.

Geography was now the fashion.[59] To explore this new-found world and to bring back accounts of what one had seen. The French, who have a tradition of travel dating from Chateaubriand, took the lead; but other nations were not far behind, especially the Germans and the Italians. The young reporter, for he was often no more than that, visited Soviet Russia, Los Angeles, China, Morand, Duhamel, Durtain,—the list is a long one. There were attempts, sometimes very superficial ones, at an interpretation of things seen, as in Durtain's *Quarantième Étage;* and a none too flattering Discovery of America, at the moment of writing, is still in fervent progress.[60] The thing kept up until a certain disillusionment came; a sense of the smallness of the world in this aeroplane age, as in Paul Morand's *Rien que la Terre;* [61] or, a good deal more tragic, a sense of the futility of endeavoring to escape from one's self through globe-wandering, as in Henry de Montherlant's *Voyageurs traqués.*[62]

The individual himself was bringing a new attentiveness to life

[58] Cocteau: "The work of art is born as magic."

[59] Delteil assures us that he works with a map of the world or a terrestrial globe on his writing-table, and dreams of walking around the world. "Each morning," he says, "I take the world's pulse."—Something of this interest in geography, as in the other sciences (chemistry, bacteriology, etc.) is, possibly, to be traced back to that early-century reform in French educational methods of which M. Berge speaks.

[60] See Duhamel's *Scènes de la vie future,* now available in translation.

[61] M. Morand predicts that we shall soon be circling the globe in forty-eight hours—almost a fulfilment of Puck's prophecy! His book, incidentally, is accessible in English translation.

[62] See the French section, following.

and the gifts it had to offer. He might feel, at times, that the tremendous fact of War had dwarfed life. He might speak of the littleness of life and the immensity of man;[63] but with it all, he found himself with a renewed and insuperable thirst for living and a passion for draining the moment of all it had to yield. He found, of a sudden, the banal become adventure and the quotidian an unblushing miracle. He was filled with a sense of ever-present risk, and felt a call for all the subtlety and heroism he could muster. The sense of mystery had been retrieved, and a new balance, in the form of a "mystic realism," had been established between heaven and earth. With many, boredom vanished in this atmosphere of everyday magic, a *féerie* not at all the same as that of the *Thousand-and-One Nights,*—not the old fabulous or the old "picturesque," but a workaday extravagance that meant a deeper reality, the rediscovery of paths where sense and spirit might meet, to bestow a new meaning upon the visual object. This impulse is apparent outside the countries directly affected by the War; it is to be made out in the Spanish Jarnès, whose *Paula y Paulita* Preface, spoken of above, has been described as "a new art of reality."[64] The exotic and the fantastic, the short of it is, had been uncovered in what is commonly known as the real.[65] No more of an older "local color," but a universe of the "five senses." There was to be a realistic precision in the creation of a magic atmosphere, as in the poems of Max Jacob and the paintings of Maurice Utrillo. The Novecentisti even called for a return to the spirit of their own Quattrocento painters, such as Masaccio, Mantegna and Piero dei Franceschi.[66] Here was a *univers inédit* to be played with, joyously, like children; a world to be treated without respect, as a child would treat a "domestic lion" (the phrase is Jarnès').[67]

And so it is, a spirit of grotesque play animates the young literature, a form of play which, with certain writers,[68] is not untinged with irony, the faint and gentle irony of an adult looking back on his childhood dreams. And in truth, childhood and the writers for

[63] Delteil. Compare Louis Aragon on Drieu La Rochelle: *"Rien ne pouvait fixer ce grand corps et le monde était trop peu pour lui."*

[64] M. Marcel Brion, writing in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires.*

[65] The reverse of Mr. James Branch Cabell's process.

[66] The thing is to be seen in the work of Hilaire Hiler, the young American painter, resident in France. Ezra Pound has applied the term "neo-naturism" to Hiler's work.

[67] For children and the world, see Delteil's *Cholera.*

[68] Such as Bontempelli and Giuseppe Zucca, for example.

children have had no little to do with the case. Pierre Mac Orlan and Paul Morand, M. Berge notes, were brought up on Jules Verne and his kind, and Jules Verne is the ancestor of the modern geographic film.[69]

In the construction of such a world, the unlikely is no longer a necessity. We find it dispensed with in such a work as the *Grand Meaulnes* of Alain Fournier. But it is not always dispensed with. Our age does, undoubtedly, possess a certain primitive character,—we occasionally hear talk of "the new primitives"—and this has led to a taste for the real primitives, the negro and others. It is the painting, with the brush of the imagination, of a decorative universe which in many cases seems to be the aim of the young writer. He has, or cultivates, a taste for the art of Douanier Rousseau and for African heads. Spiritually, in his passion for an absolute and metaphysical simplicity, he has been seen as the great-grandson of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Schlegel's *Lucinda.* His quest of the primitive may lead him to seek, in his own work, a content that is at once fantastic and objective; or it may lead him into paths far afield, in search of the curious, the strange and the monstrous. In the latter instance, like the savage with his bauble, he stands enamored of the artificial object, a state of mind or of soul that is revealed in such writers as Vergani and De la Serna. Sometimes, the modern spirit of fantasy takes a lyric turn, as in Lucio d'Aquara's *La Titanide.* Often, it is inspired by the near presence of the modern city. What we have, to sum it up, is a world of objective particulars, the universe again as bric-à-brac. This is that world which M. Julien Benda combats, as having sidetracked us from the quest of the universal and the eternal.[70]

Out of it all has emerged a doctrine,—for it is a doctrine, with an aesthetic of its own as well as a creative practice,—known as Super-realism. *Surréalisme* would solve the problem of the present unrest by denying the possibility of any solution. It erects the non-existence of an absolute into an absolute. Its credo, as set forth by its nominal founder, M. André Breton,[71] is the spontaneous and uncontrolled play of the personality, unhampered by any of the

[69] Rimbaud, *Une saison d'enfer: "Oh! la vie d'aventures qui existe dans les livres des enfants."*

[70] *La Trahison des clercs,* 1927. Available in English translation.

[71] *Manifeste du Surréalisme,* 1924. See, also, *Second Manifeste du Surréalisme,* published in *La Révolution Surréaliste,* No. 12 (December, 1929) and reprinted in book form, 1930.

fetters of civilization.[72] The Surréaliste claims affinity with Plato and Berkeley.[73] Morally, he exhibits a categoric pessimism. "As though there were any reasons," exclaims Louis Aragon, "to go on living!" In this "age of ashes,"[74] an age in which energy and violence have become the mysticisms that rule mankind,[75] the young man of the century is inclined to look upon progress, that idol of the Nineteenth century, as does the Cocteau of *Le Potomak,* as a "biologic vaudeville."[76] With the Italian poet, Riccardo Bacchelli, he would say:

Then, it is no longer worth the while to die.
I live a De Profundis, sluggish and unclean.

He is a *"humoriste désespéré";* or if he rallies, it is to a vision "beyond Nietzsche: "No longer to will the good, the rational, the eternal, the just."[77] The ideal Surréaliste act would be: "to run down into the street, a revolver in each hand, and start firing at random into the crowd."[78]

Suicide, for the one who believes in *"l'inutilité théâtrale et sans joie de tout,"* [79] would impress one as being the logical and inevitable conclusion; and indeed, the first *enquête* which the Surréalistes conducted was on the question: *Le suicide est-il une solution?"* Suicides have occurred. There was that of Jacques Rigaut, in November, 1929. Rigaut previously had written: "There are no reasons to go on living; but no more are there any reasons for dying. . . . The only way left in which we can manifest our contempt for life is by accepting it."[80] All of Rigaut's maturer life appears to have been a

[72] See, in the French section following, the statements of Breton, Aragon, Rivière, Eluard, and others.

[73] Louis Aragon, *La Révolution Surréaliste,* I., p. 23.

[74] Borgese's *Rubè* (see Note 23).

[75] See Consiglio, op. cit., Note 3. Cf. the French Seillière, whose work Consiglio is studying.

[76] The date of *Le Potomak* is to be noted: 1913–14, with a *"Prospectus"* dated 1916.

[77] G. Evola. See the Italian section, following.

[78] This statement will be found in the second *Un Cadavre,* a manifesto directed against Breton by G. Ribemont-Dessaignes and other seceding Surréalistes and published in the spring of 1930; not to be confused with the first *Un Cadavre,* against Anatole France, published in 1924.

[79] Jacques Vaché.

[80] *La Nouvelle Revue Française,* August, 1930, p. 255. This issue contains Rigaut's posthumous *Lord Patchogue* and Victor Crastre's *Sur le Suicide de Jacques Rigaut,* pp. 251ff.

battle against self-destruction: "I am a man who is endeavoring not to die."[81] He was a victim of introspection (the symbolism of a mirror held him fascinated), as is indicated by his *"l'oeil qui regarde l'oeil qui regarde l'oeil qui regarde . . . . "*[82] If the question of sanity is raised in his case, his own statement may be cited: "In an insane-asylum, it is clear that there is but one madman, the superintendent."[83]

"Philosophic suicide" is not a wholly novel thing. Papini, as far back as 1910, had described the case of Carlo Michelstaedter;[84] but it would be interesting to know in just how far the suicidal pessimism—the defeatism, if you choose to call it that—of the after-War young is a derivative of the philosophic doctrine of discontinuity.[85] At least one group-organ is to be found bearing the title, *Discontinuité;*[86] and this publication, as it happens, carries pessimism to a point beyond suicide; it is the expression—there can be no doubt, this time—of an absolute defeatism.[87]

Back of Super-realism, there is the parent Dada; and Dada really started in 1916, at a time when what is known as civilization seemed to have degenerated into a world-farce; it may be said to have started with the meeting of André Breton and that despairing dandy, Jacques Vaché, in a military hospital at Nantes; its roots are obviously sunk in social chaos. And both Dada and its successor, *Surréalisme,* are but the foam on the crest of a wave of irrationalism. The young age has a veritable hatred of the intellect and its reasons; it demands, with the Dadaists, the "derisive abolition of the brain";[88] it is *"L'Esprit, contre la Raison."*[89] This revolt against reason and apothesis of unreason[90] is looked upon by some as the expression of a romantic mysticism, and such it not unlikely is.[91] *Surréalisme,*

[81] Ibid., p. 203.

[82] Ibid., p. 204.

[83] Ibid., p. 198.—The still comparatively recent suicide (in 1930) of the Russian poet, Mayakovsky, is to be recalled.

[84] *24 Cervelli,* 1913 (the Michelstaedter paper is dated 1910).

[85] M. Valéry, in his 1894 Leonardo essay, employs the word, but assures us that his *"discontinuité"* is "not that of the mathematicians."

[86] *Discontinuité,* No. 1, June, 1928.

[87] See, in the French section following, the manifesto entitled "The Dawn Is Not a Sword."

[88] *Littérature,* No. 1, March, 1919. (See Note 16, above.)

[89] Title of a work by René Crevel (*Cahiers du Sud*).

[90] See G. Evola, in the Italian section, following.

[91] *"Le surréalisme, mysticisme sans religion"* is the title of an article by M. Louis Laloy, in *L'Ere Nouvelle,* November, 1930.

following the World War, offers more than one parallel—and here, we may refer to Signor Flora [92] once more—to that Romanticism that followed the Napoleonic campaigns. The analogy is, often, striking enough, but, not unnaturally, is little dwelt upon by those among the young who speak so loudly of a "break with tradition;" it is only occasionally, when for some reason the need of an ancestor or two is felt, that we find a Lautréamont [93] being excavated or a Rimbaud being "discovered." And since, ordinarily, the younger movement has been rather woefully lacking in critics, both from within and from without, it is not surprising if, not infrequently, the attitudes of the 1830's, having become in reality the platitudes of 1930, are palmed off as the latest modernisms without any authoritative challenge of the essential newness of the theory or the attitude involved.

It would require something like a volume to go into the subject with the requisite degree of thoroughness; but one may, perhaps, point out in passing a few of the more obvious parallels. When we hear, for example, the young writer of today talking of a vague "revolution," we may take him back to Baudelaire upon the barricades of 1848 (bent upon killing his stepfather), or further back yet, to Lord Byron and the Isles of Greece, where "burning Sappho" loved and sung. If he takes his fling at the bourgeoisie, or speaks of himself or his doings as "scandalous,"[94] we will unearth an ancient and by now rather musty-smelling *épater*. If he parades his "hard-boiledness," we will find its roots for him in a Baudelairean *dandysme*. *Etc.* Even his discovery of the body, of which something is to be said further on, is not novel; Lord Byron may be said to have made that discovery, as the Middle Ages (compare the *Rixa animi et corporis*) and the Greeks before him had done, when he swam the Hellespont. As for a much heralded "Revolution of the Word,"—but that is another subject.

Such analogies as these, while they deserve to be noted, are not to be overstressed.[95] As has been stated above, there are important differences between the New Romanticism and the old; and there

[92] Francesco Flora, *Dal Romanticismo al Futurismo,* 1921.

[93] Lautréamont's *Les Chants de Maldoror* were published in 1869; the *Oeuvres complètes,* edited by Philippe Soupault, appeared in 1917; the posthumous *Poésies* were also published in the latter year. See M. Léon Pierre-Quint's *Le Comte de Lautréamont et Dieu,* 1929.

[94] *La Révolution Surréaliste* is advertised as "the most scandalous review in the world."

[95] See Bouvier, op. cit. (Note 8), pp. 70ff.

is, too, a perduring poverty of essential attitudes and ideas, and a sense in which the old is always new—and vital, as well,—and, by a little freshening-up, can be made to appear truly "revolutionary." The thing to do, in Signor Flora's phrase, is *"metter tutti nella storia":* to place all movements and personalities in the historic stream, and in that process to determine the valuation that is to be put upon our contemporaries. When we, of the year 1930, do that, we see both Joyce [96] and Lawrence [97] as Romantic figures, and are inclined to accept the contention of those who assert that we are still *en plein romantisme.*[98]

In any case, the tendency of the past decade undeniably has been a romantic, mystic, anti-rationalistic one. Señor Eugenio d'Ors has termed Goya's "When Reason goes to sleep, monsters are begot" a "Declaration of the Rights of Monsters";[99] and writers since the Armistice have, for the most part, been busy issuing just such a bill of rights. Anatole France may have regarded Saint-Beuve as the St. Thomas Aquinas of the Nineteenth century; but on the day that France was buried, a number of his young countrymen put out an insulting manifesto, negating all the things for which either France or Saint-Beuve had stood.[100]

VII

Thus far, we have been dealing with the writer very largely in his relation to the external world, even though that relation be an internal one. We have seen him forswearing emotion and endeavoring to convert himself into a purely sensitive apparatus, and the thing with which we have been concerned has been the effect of the external shock upon the organism. We have beheld Proust pointing the way to a new manner of seeing things, what amounts to a revaluation of optic reality, while both Proust and Gide stand for a certain attitude toward life, and the being—call it the soul of man, if you

[96] See Mr. Herbert Read's article on Joyce, in the English section, following.

[97] Mr. Bronowski (see Introduction to the English and Irish section, following) has described Lawrence as a "romantic not oppressed by the decline of romanticism."

[98] The young writer may occasionally drop his slur at Romanticism (such as Caballero's *"Romanticismo y saliva"*), but one is not to be deceived by that.

[99] Jean Cassou, *Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine,* p. 145.

[100] Reference to *Le Cadavre,* 1924. See French section, following.

like,—that is at the core of life. It is Gide, with his effort to "make the possible come alive," who has, perhaps, determined the major stream, the current culminating in the cascade of *Surréalisme*. Here, Proust's contribution has been chiefly on the side of method; he has contributed the eye, or an impulse to the employment of the eye. As for Valéry, a name usually mentioned with those of Proust and Gide, we shall have to do with him in connection with an impulse to "evasion" and "escape."

It would be wrong to assume that the new literature is wholly concerned with the outward, if inwardly transformed, reality. There are the two tendencies, toward the outer and the inner real. At a time when the French press is reporting the centenary of Romanticism, it may be recorded that the psychological novel, descendant of a Zola and Flaubert realism that came as a reaction against Romanticism, is not yet dead. This is especially true in France, where the novel-form has a very firmly established introspective basis. This type of writing naturally has gone forward hand in hand with psychology, and has been given a tremendous impetus by Freud. It remains the most traditional, the least *révolté* of modern forms, for the good reason that a break with the past in the domain of science is scarcely conceivable. The literary psychologist, however, is distinguished from others by the nature of his aim, which is neither interested nor systematic. The more traditional type is to be met with in a writer like Jacques de Lacretelle, while as we approach the advance-guard, we have the interior monologue, cinema-like in effect, and a special brand of Surréaliste poetry.

What has been stated is as much as to say that the problem of the *"moi,"* of his own personality, is still a vital and a baffling one for the young European.[101] A being lost in space, he may drop his sneer at "Nineteenth-century psychology"; but the fact remains, it is difficult to reach out for the universal, when the personal mechanism that proposes to do the reaching displays imminent signs of breaking down. For a Cartesian *Cogito, ergo sum* will no longer stand. In a universe of flux, interior as well as exterior unity is lacking, and no sort of synthesis seems possible, until we have such a cry as Robert Honnert's: "The more I survey the evidence to the effect that I am a multiple being, the more I am devoured by an inextinguishable thirst for unity. . . . I am afraid of being but a crumbling phenomenon." This brings us to the Proustian *"intermittences*

[101] It is worth while going back to read M. Valéry's darkly beautiful pages on the *moi*, in his Leonardo essay.

du coeur" and that *"âme totale"* which is possessed of a value *"presque fictive."* The unfulfilled thirst for personal unity leads invariably to a feeling of impotence on the plane of action. It often leads, in literature, to the disordered and tumultuous autobiographic narrative,[102] or to a self-quest and self-exploration that is almost as agonizing for the reader as for the author.[103]

What has been going on is a dissociation of the personality (compare De Gourmont's "dissociation of ideas" in the century preceding). But the work of reconstruction already has been begun. The Novecentist tells us that the most urgent and clean-cut task of the century is to build anew, in a "frigid immobility," Time and Space, to build toward and in the infinite, to erect a new absolute in the form of the external object; yet, we hear him at other times demanding a simultaneous reconstruction of the external and the internal (the individual), and the creation thereby of a new reality, a "new and solid world." Even in the shadow of Mussolini, the individual is to be rediscovered, and beyond the individual,—perhaps (compare Nietzsche)—there awaits the shadowy figure of God, to be attained through a "spiritual geometry." If there is no God, we will create a demiurge, says Filippo Burzio.[104] It may be that what is to be achieved is only an illusion; but an illusion is something, something that may prove a working basis. There is a reaction against those Proustian *"intermittences du coeur,"* with Ramon Fernandez protesting that "the notions of the personality and of the unity of the personality are indispensable to any attempt at spiritual progress, and to the inner life.[105]

If there is one thing in the air at the present moment, above the mêlée of modernism, it is the note of evasion, of escape from the break-up of the personality. One way out is the human body. This at least confers the illusion of external unity. Viewed from without, the personality appears to be a functioning unit. This will account for the stress laid upon the body and its expression in sport and athletics. It might almost be said that what is taking place is a rediscovery of the body and the formulation of a new and mystic "human-

[102] A case in point is Corrado Alvaro's *L'Uomo nel laborinto.*

[103] It is not always in the young that this is to be seen; it is sometimes to be found in an older writer, like the Italian poet, Pietro Mastri (born in 1868).

[104] See Burzio's "The Problem of the Demiurge," in the Italian section, following. *Discorso sul demiurgo,* 1929. Compare Evola.

[105] M. Fernandez is the author of an important essay on *Proust et les intermittences du coeur.*

ism," as with Jean Schlumberger,[106] with the body as a center. An escape is sought through sensuality, but not the sensuality that has been known of old,—rather, the pure and rarified sensuality of the athlete, the man who triumphs *with* his body. Sport now has a metaphysic of its own,[107] and is the object of a critical, intellectual and humanistic cult,[108] paid to the "divinity of adventure and of muscle."[109] These are the new rites of Hercules,—Hercules replacing, even with the Spaniards, a no longer sufficing Don Juan.[110] This Hercules is a sort of cross between the medieval knight and a Douglas Fairbanks,[111] and it is in that new theatre which is the boxing-ring and the stadium that the faithful, a *"juventud gimnosodermica,"* gather to pay him worship. In all this may be seen a reflection of that necessity of action which the one who had just emerged from the period of the War felt: the necessity of acting, in order that he might feel himself alive.

Whatever the cause or the explanation, it is certain that a "body literature" has grown up. Among the writers who represent this trend may be mentioned Jean Prévost,[112] Robert Honnert, René Crevel, Dominique Braga, Henri de Montherlant, et al. The titles are significant: *Plaisir des Sports; Corps et âme; Mon Corps et moi;* etc.[113]

The end of it is, the physical man is to be resurrected, by way of giving a meaning to this mechanized universe in which we live. The body means action, and action is a refuge, possibly the most satisfying that there is; and it is, precisely, this refuge that the "new humanism" seeks.[114] This after-War passion for action (again, the mysticism of energy, which may become violence) is to be found all over Europe. In Italy, it takes the form of a cult of the Demiurge; in Spain, Señor Rafael Calleja is striving to found a cult of

[106] *Dialogues avec le corps endormi.*

[107] One frequently sees articles in the literary journals on *"La metaphysique du tennis,"* etc.

[108] See E. Giménez Caballero, *Hercules jugando a los dados,* 1930, pp. 30–31.

[109] Ibid., pp. 23–4.

[110] Ibid., pp. 20–1.

[111] Ibid., pp. 16, 19.

[112] See the extracts from the Preface to M. Prévost's *Plaisir des sports,* French section, following.

[113] *Corps et âme* is by Honnert, *Mon Corps et moi* by Crevel.

[114] See M. Fernandez, "The Humanism of Action," French section, following.

fanaticism, with an ideal of action, of will, and of enthusiasm.[115] In Germany, the movement is vividly outlined, in literature and in life, in that literature which is a reflection of life; while the pure artist is to be found there (Thomas Mann is an example), the tendency is toward activism. It would seem that, while those who technically won the War have discovered the fruit of victory to be a paralyzing impotence, the defeated have made for the quickest way out, by falling back upon a worship of the body that attains, at times, a sexual intensity. In the pages of *Der Querschnitt* are to be found boxing-matches and Georg Grosz, horse-races and post-expressionism mingling fraternally; and across the border, the same is true of *Variétés*. Athletics, the cinema, dice; such, says Caballero, is the trinity; the thing sought is adventure, danger, chance and a sense of velocity.[116]

In connection with the cult of the body, there is an evident tendency to banish introspection. Read M. Prévost's violent essay on the subject. Prévost, however, goes on to point out that this does not negate the idea of a soul, but that, on the contrary, the religious concept may be clarified by the physical emphasis: "The soul is not to be denied, for the reason that we experience no impression of it; but we shall never come to know it through a sensation, but through the idea arising from all our sensations."

This brings us to the mystic and the Christian escape. Christianity, by its essence, tends to re-establish the personality. It satisfies the thirst for an overthrown absolute, and provides a haven, as for Cocteau, in a universe of overwhelming particulars. This will account for the conversions of which we hear from time to time, and in part for the movement centering about Maritain. We even have, in the pages of Georges Bernanos, the devil appearing upon the scene in person, although the devil whom we meet there is hardly the Satan of tradition. In England, there is, of course, Mr. T. S. Eliot and the neo-Thomist reaction, mirroring the one across the Channel. In Spain, there is a new Catholicism, newer yet than Unamuno. For the Church has come to stand for the tenet of *being*, as opposed to a Bergsonian *becoming*.[117]

But the mystic escape is not the only one. There is the aesthetic

[115] *Voz y voto*, 1930.

[116] Caballero, op. cit., pp. 13ff.

[117] See Alberto Consiglio, *Note sul Maritenismo*, in *Solaria*, August, 1928, pp. 43ff.

escape, represented by M. Valéry,[118] in which art becomes a game,[119] a game played by the intelligence—has not M. Valéry defined poetry as a "solemn festival of the intellect"? It is the intellect against the chaos of the visible world,[120] over against the bewilderments of a "pluralistic universe,"[121] all the multiple temptations of the *"inépuisable moi."*

With the Valéry attitude, compare that doctrine of the "dehumanization of art" which the great Spanish critic, Ortega y Gasset, has propagated, and which is now the point of view of the young Vanguardistas.[122] In accordance with this view, which cannot be set forth in detail here, there is to be something like a complete divorce between art on the one hand and life and humanity on the other.[123]

Another way out is Gide's, whose "cure" M. Berge dubs the "homeopathic" one, the treating of a bad case of *sensibilité* with—*sensibilité*. Yet another indication is the revolt against a prevailing anti-lyricism, on the part of the *"Philosophies"* or *"L'Esprit"* group, led by Pierre Morhange ("John Brown"). There is also a back-to-lyricism movement in Germany, in the form of a *neue Herzlichkeit* that holds more than one romantic element, elements reminiscent of Jean Paul Richter: *"Man trägt wieder Herz"* once more. This impulse is speeded up by a revival of the *Drang nach dem Süden,* or southern and Italian influence (another romantic one).[124]

There is also an escape on the social side, in the direction of a new collectivism. The influence of the modern sociologists and of the Unanimists has been spoken of above. In Italy, the downfall of Nineteenth-century democracy is proclaimed, "with one tomb at Moscow and one at Rome";[125] but in the next breath, the Novecen-

[118] For a corrective of this view, see Mr. Eliot's *Introduction to the Method of Paul Valéry.*

[119] For a corrective here, see Ferrero, *Leonardo, o dell' arte,* pp. 149ff.—This view of art as a game leads, with certain writers, to pure *fumisterie.*

[120] *"Mais la vérité et la vie sont désordre; les filiations et les parentés qui ne sont pas surprenantes ne sont pas réelles . . ."* (*Essai sur Stendhal.*)

[121] *"L'esprit se multiplie entre ses possibles."* (Ibid.)

[122] See an extremely lively and well-informed article on "The Spanish Vanguard," by Jenny Ballou, in the New York Herald Tribune *Books* for September 7, 1930.

[123] The author of the article cited in the preceding note raises the pertinent question as to whether this attitude represents, in reality, a disgust with life and humanity or, rather, a satiety with and abhorrence of art itself.

[124] See Max Krell's *Orangen in Ronco.*

[125] See Bontempelli's article, "900," in the Critics and Essayists portion of the Italian section, following.

tist is assuring us that, in his search of the universal, he has a contempt "for any international." Nevertheless, the social syndicalisms which are forming are having a very appreciable effect. They are having their direct and immediate effect upon the mode of writing, and we are informed that "Style is the summation of a culture and the expression of a collective symbolism."[126] Just as the later Eighteenth century discovered German thought, so now watch must be kept beyond the Vistula, on those vast plains that stretch away, seemingly without end, in the direction of Asia.

For Russia, to many, holds the key. Even if the political and social forms which she is essaying prove to be no more than an experiment, the experiment is a highly significant one, and even failure would have a meaning. "We were people; now we are epochs," her poets sing.[127] And modern Russia has given the world at least three poets of continental stature, in Essenin, Pasternak and Mayakovsky. "The flood of life," declares Alexei Tolstoy, "has burst through the portals of a new world. Bourgeois civilization is perishing like Atlantis."[128] And yet, the same writer has to admit that "The eight years of revolution have not yet created a Proletarian literature," while Boris Pasternak declares that Russia has been undergoing, not a cultural revolution, but a "cultural reaction," and that, as a result of the "logic of large numbers," only the most mediocre of either revolutionary or non-revolutionary forms are tolerated.[129] What is needed, according to Pasternak, is a plastic "dictatorship"; and Victor Shklovsky, founder of the Formalist school of criticism, and his followers would set at defiance the social and political philosophy of the time, by excluding all vitiating non-aesthetic considerations.[130]

It seems likely that, so far as literature and the social revolution are concerned, the Russians themselves will be the first to be dis-

[126] See Mr. Reavey's Introduction to the Russian section, following.

[127] Boris Pasternak; see Russian section, following.

[128] Tolstoy preaches the messianic mission of Russia, as the spiritual pioneer in the face of a decaying Europe.

[129] The new "style," it is pointed out, is a blending of epoch-changes and of populism.

[130] According to the Formalists, artistic forms are to be explained "by their own artistic laws, and not by social motivation." Pasternak (see Russian section) will be heard declaring that the artist must expect no aid other than from his own imagination, that art should represent the furthest reach and not the mean of an epoch, and that only the natural growth and strength of art can relate it to its epoch.

illusioned; but nothwithstanding this fact, Communism is caught up as a part of their creed by the members of more than one group. The Surréalistes are avowed Communists, and recently, when called upon by Moscow to come out into the open, as it were, took a fairly definite stand.[131] But it is to be noted that what *les jeunes* desire, more often than not, is simply "a revolution," whatever that may mean,—something that will overturn established modes of thought and feeling, something that will obviate the stock responses of a doddering world and the doddering generation immediately preceding, and afford play for new reactions and a new and as yet undiscovered sensitivity.[132] What the Surréalistes, for instance, are after is not so much a new political order as a new reality. It is not strange, therefore, if they should be looked upon more or less askance by those others of the young who are devoting their energies actively to the cause of political upheaval.[133]

More important than any social declarations on the part of the young is the tacitly inherent attitude of two writers who have exerted a profound influence upon all their contemporaries: Joyce and Proust. Mr. Bronowsky draws attention [134] to the fact that these writers stand for an acceptance of, an acquiescence in their social environment, and that if intolerance is manifested, it is a personal and not a social feeling. It is, in brief, a case of individual friction. In Joyce, there is rebellion but no doubt, while his acquiescence in the Catholic tradition leaves him free to explore problems of language and the like.

Communism, and Super-realism as well, Mr. Wyndham Lewis [135] would have us believe, have an Oriental tinge; whereas, in much of the after-War literature, there is a distinct Occidental note.[136] Bontempelli states that he has an equal contempt for the Oriental *danse*

[131] See *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, 1930.

[132] This attitude, a disdain of a mere political revolution, was frankly expressed in the course of a controversy that arose between the group about the American-Parisian review, *transition*, and the young revolutionary group in America.

[133] In France, there are a number of literary-social revolutionary groups of various shades of political opinion. In Germany, the literary alignments are very largely social and political.

[134] See introduction to the English and Irish section, following.

[135] *Time and Western Man.*

[136] See, in the Italian section following, the article, "Orient," by Emilio Cecchi. Compare Burzio and Evola.—Contrast Rimbaud's "bogs of the Occident" (*les marais occidentaux*), Oeuvres, Mercure de France edition, p. 298.

du ventre and the doctrine of metempsychosis.[137] What the Novecentisti want, or say they want, is a *"reprise mediterranéene,"* the transformation of Mediterranean into a European culture, which shall be a radiating center of world culture.[138]

Out of it all emerges one transcendent desire: for a reconstruction of the universe, with a new perfection to be striven for and a new absolute, if only in the reality of the moment, to be attained. Unrest, many are beginning to feel, is no longer to be set up as an end in itself, and the "bankruptcy of the subconscious"[139] is announced by M. Emmanuel Berl. This is to take account only of the movements coming out of one or another of the somewhat numerous "advance-guards"; it is not to speak of such manifestations as the recent French *Populisme.* One thing is certain, there is, all over Europe, a new and growing stress on *content* (the Italians call it *contenutismo*) and a reaction against over-experimentation and those aberrations in form that are not justified by the content.[140] It may be that what is needed is a "new totalism,"[141] a synthesis which shall bring some sort of order out of all the conflicting tendencies which may lay claim to the adjective, "modern."

VIII

Such, in necessarily brief strokes, is the spirit of the young European literature of today, as this writer has been able to see it through his own eyes and through those of its critics and spokesmen. There are left certain things which may be said concerning prominent but more or less incidental characteristics—one might call them earmarks —of this body of writing.

First, as to choice of subject. Here, the old academic rules, the rules that governed those writers who have become our classics, have been abandoned. The modern writer is restrained by no tim-

[137] See the article, "900," in the Italian section.

[138] On Mediterraneanism, compare Valéry, *Variété,* I., p. 38. For the characteristics of the European, see Ibid., p. 41.—Compare Stendhal's "cosmopolite," Nietzsche's "good European." The question of "Europeanism" is a vital, and frequently a vexing one for the Italian of today. See Alberto Consiglio's *Europeismo* and Rafaello Franchi's *L'Europeo sedentario* (both published in 1929).

[139] See the French section, following.

[140] See the manifesto, *Direction,* issued by a young American group in Paris, Autumn, 1930.

[141] M. Berge.

idity, no modesty; there is no theme, no matter how "abnormal" it may be, that he does not feel free to select. After Freud, what is there to shun? And yet, strange as it may seem to some, this freedom almost never leads to pornography. Nor does it find expression in the form of a new Zolaesque naturalism; the one thing the young author steers clear of is the novel or the art-work with a thesis; he has nothing to expound, no souls to save—how speak of salvation, when he is no longer conscious of a soul that is one? What he is interested in giving us, true enough, is a "slice of life," but it is a slice that has no crust; for him, there are no conclusions.

On the side of form, with a decided overlapping of genres, there is, as in modern painting, a prevailing simplicity of line. This is especially visible in the simplification of description, which is effected rather by the revealing flash, all classification and interpretation being forsworn. There is, at the root of the young writing, a disgust with the cliché. This often calls forth the accusation of "originality at any cost." When carried to an extreme, it tends to produce the hermetic author—and a deal of bad writing. We are now back at the question of "obscurity," "unintelligibility," etc. At this point, there appears to be a fundamental lack of understanding between the artist and a good portion of the public. As M. Cocteau observes, the public wants to understand first and feel afterward, where, to the artist, feeling is the important thing. It is Expression versus Communication. The Dadaists started out with the determination to produce "strong works, works forever incomprehensible," [142] and in this, they were following in the footsteps of Mallarmé, who defined a poem as "a mystery, of which the reader is to seek the key."[143] The artist will tell you, as does M. Berge,[144] that the desire to comprehend frequently veils the real beauty of a work; but this doctrine is a galling one to those, including a good part of the active social revolutionists, who believe that the function of language is a social one,—who believe, in other words, in communication as the meaning of speech.

There is going on, all the while, a transformation of the word, a "Revolution of the word," deriving its impulse partly from the Irish

[142] *Littérature,* No. 1, March, 1919.

[143] *"Un mystère dont le lecteur doit chercher la clef."* M. Péon Pierre-Quint, *Le Comte de Lautréamont et Dieu,* p. 12, note 1, asserts that *hermétisme,* under certain forms, may be traced as far back as the seventeenth century, to such authors as Corneille, La Fontaine, etc.

[144] Introduction to the French section.

Joyce,[145] partly from *Surréalisme,*[146] which regards language as an ultra-realistic vision of an hallucinatory world. This verbal revolution may be taken as the relentless ultimate of that process of linguistic deliquescence to which, in the last century, M. Paul Bourget applied the term, "decadence."[147] It is a breaking up of language, a tearing up of words from their, after all, loose-rooted and tottering significations. The thing is not new. There is Rimbaud, with his theory of Palingenesis, as applied to the word and to poetry. The French Decadents may be said to have broken down, though not in a systematic manner, the confines of grammar and of punctuation. There is Cocteau's *Le Potomak,* with its declaration that literature is but "the dictionary in disorder." Immediately after the War, Filippo Tomaso Marinetti published his *Les mots en liberté futuristes* (1919). There was, we are not to forget, Apollinaire, his *Calligrammes,* etc., the influence coming from Cubism. The fact is, a justification for the "Revolution of the Word" might be found in Horace's *Ars poetica,*[148] in Cicero's *De oratore* and many other classic works,[149] not to mention the linguistic scientist's assertion of the arbitrary character of language, or the schoolmaster's dictum (derived from Horace) that usage—"the usage of the best speakers and writers" (who are the best?)—determines correctness.

This uprooting of language on the part of the extreme Left is seen to be the pitiless development of a principle inherent in language itself. The young writer feels that this process must be intensi-

[145] The young Irish poet, Samuel Beckett, is attempting to do for poetry what Joyce has done for prose.

[146] Due to Joyce, the verbal revolution has reached a higher stage of development in English than in French, being especially evident in the group that surrounded *transition.* In France, the academy long has exerted a baleful influence over word-freedom; but with M. Roger Vitrac and others, we witness an attempt to show, and to see, what can be done with the language of Joyce's predecessor, Rabelais. See M. Vitrac's *Le Language à part,* in *transition,* No. 18.

[147] See the *Essais de la psychologie contemporaine.* An English version of M. Bourget's remarks on decadence will be found in the Introduction by Havelock Ellis to the John Howard translation of Huysmans' *A Rebours* ("Against the Grain").

[148] ". . . *usus . . . arbitrium est et ius et norma loquendi,* etc.

[149] *De oratore: "Ergo utimur verbis aut iis quae propria sunt et certa quasi vocabula rerum . . . aut iis quae transferuntur et quasi alieno in loco collocantur, aut iis quae novamus et facimus ipsi,"* etc. (III., 37–8.) See, also, Ibid., I., 34, where the author speaks of words forged in imitation of the Greek, and compare the Joycean process. See Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano,* I., 28ff.

fied and accelerated, that there is nothing to do but to carry it out to the bitter end, if the, to him otherwise hopeless, crystallization of the world's modes of thought and feeling is to be dissolved; and with this object in view, he is ready to subordinate his inclinations to a more tangible revolution on the social and political plane.[150]

However successful or unsuccessful the verbal revolution may be, there can be no doubt that it will have its effect, and already has left its traces. For one thing, there has been a shifting in word-magic. Where the magic formerly lay in the phrase, it is now to be found in the syllable. The well-turned phrase, it seems, is to follow the rotund period of old. Besides the sound-magic of the syllable, there is another enchantment which the young have discovered, and that is "typographical magic." Here, once more, Apollinaire is an apparent forerunner, although M. Vitrac is inclined to doubt his authenticity.[151]

It is not alone on the linguistic side that the young literature is changing. An overlapping of genres and a tendency to obliterate all genres has been recorded. There are, moreover, certain art-forms which, so far as *les jeunes* are concerned, have lived their day. One of these is the theatre. This institution holds little lure for the man grown to writing maturity since the War. In Italy, despite the propinquity of the Independents' theatre of Anton Giulio Bragaglia, an outgrowth of Futurism,[152] the Novecentisti are engaged in celebrating the obsequies of the playhouse.[153] The same group likewise has abandoned the poem, at least for a period of years to come, much as Apollinaire suggested that the painting of nudes be dispensed with for a period of ten years.[154] The cinema is still the most inspiring of forms, and the talking picture has been seen as the possible first sign of a coming synthesis.

[150] This was brought out in the course of that controversy which has been referred to in Note 132, above.

[151] There are other influences which should be mentioned, pointed out by M. Vitrac in his article: Mallarmé; Jarry's *Ubu roi;* Tristan Tzara and the Dadaists; etc.

[152] Italy, ever since Futurism, has been a good deal concerned with a "synthetic theatre."

[153] See Bontempelli's "900," in the Italian section, following. There is, of course, an effort to rehabilitate the playhouse. Bragaglia's demand is for a "theatric theatre," a theatre in the etymologic sense of the word.—See an article by Charensol, on *La Mort du théâtre,* "900," No. 3, pp. 178ff., also, *Nous et le théâtre,* Ibid., No. 2, pp. 176ff., etc.

[154] *Destin de la poèsie,* "900," No. 2, p. 184.

Further, certain moods are conspicuous by their absence. Among these is humor, as humor has been understood in the past. Humor there is in the new literature, but a transformed, transmuted variety. It is a humor possessed of a fantastic dream-like character that is not wholly unlike that of Rabelais. Ilya Ehrenburg says of his hero, "He loves the magic nonsense of life,"[155] and it is this magic nonsense with which the new humor is concerned. It is a humor that is to be seen in certain outstanding figures of the epoch, such as that of Max Jacob in France.[156] While the professional humorist is still left wondering why it is he is snubbed by his more serious brethren, the latter indulge in *cocasseries*[157] to which his own audacity is scarcely equal. For the newer humor, and this is its most salient characteristic, is not a mode of looking at life; it is not indifferent, as with Anatole France; above all, it is not *gay*. Very often, when not downright Surréaliste, it is of a weird, grotesque character, as with certain of the young Irish poets.[158]

The after-the-War world is not a funny one.

IX

Enough should have been said to establish the point that the War has had its appreciable and definite effects upon the practitioners of literature and their practice.[159] The after-War decade may appear to be rather a barren one, if it is great and outstanding names that we are seeking; from such a point of view, it scarcely can compare, for example, with a decade like that from 1830 to 1840. But may it not be that the past twelve years have been a period of fermentation and of germination, the real fruits of which are yet to be seen, possibly in the decade to come?[160]

[155] See Ehrenburg's story, "Merry Paolo," in the Russian section.

[156] See M. Bouvier, op. cit., Note 8, pp. 72–3.

[157] *"Tout ce qui amuse en surprenant."* (M. Berge).

[158] One may mention Geoffrey Taylor and Samuel Beckett.

[159] In Italy alone, observes M. Crémieux, has the War had the effect of a throwback to tradition; but this statement, so far as Italy is concerned, is debatable.

[160] Ardengo Soffici: *"Ogni nuova civilazione esce dal riso dei bambini."* —"Instead of generalizing about the epoch, which is really the task of the future, we have compelled the epoch itself to live as an incarnated generalization." (Boris Pasternak.—See his "Response to the Resolution of the R. C. P.," in the Russian section, following.)

However this may be, the present writer, in the foregoing sketch, has striven to take the young upon their own terms. He must deny any underlying critical or judicial intention. His task has been reporting, an art for which he has a very high respect, and which is the preliminary to a conceivable editorializing in the form of criticism. Under such circumstances, he pretends to no originality. The reporter's business is to see—although few may be capable of seeing—the scene, and then to report it, gathering his data and his documents where he finds them. The preceding paper has been written after eight years of intensive reading of the young, their spokesmen and their critics. In it, the author has sought for that lively yet detached sympathy which a reporter ought to manifest. There are some who will say that he has taken his subject too seriously. That is a good fault for a reporter to have. After all, there was the War. And youth only becomes "amusing" with the approach of age.

SAMUEL PUTNAM.

PARIS,
November, 1930.

FRANCE

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FRANCE

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NOTE ON THE FRENCH SECTION

With France, a slightly different course has been followed than in the case of the other countries. Ezra Pound has stated that European literature from 1830 to 1917 has been very largely French literature. This statement will stand; but one is not sure that the date is not to be pushed up considerably, in the direction of 1930. It is in France, for example, that two of the most striking and important effects of the War as reflected in literature have occurred: namely, the break-down of reality and the break-up of the human personality, and young France has not been without its influence upon the rest of the continent. In France, moreover, while there may be a far greater number of writers, the scene is, after all, relatively simpler than in a highly individualistic country like Italy; for the tendency to group-manifestation facilitates a certain simplification and even a significant skeletonization which might be impossible or not feasible elsewhere. This state of affairs lends itself to a running-story form; that form, indeed, is the one that seems to be called for, and is, accordingly, the one which, in the rough, has been adopted here. The classification, therefore, is not by poets, creative prosateurs, critics, essayists, etc., but rather by impulses and movements, the chronological order being in the main preserved.

INTRODUCTION

By André Bergé

It is easy enough to speak of the "literature" of an era; but one should not lose sight of the fact that this is no more than a convenient formula the legitimacy of which is open to discussion. There are, first of all, the "books" of an era, and they are as innumerable as they are undisciplined, each reflecting a distinct personality. The years produce a decantation, the importance of which it

is the general tendency to exaggerate; history thereupon steps in, classifies, eliminates, and proceeds to compose its manuals. And yet, however difficult it may be for the contemporary to find his way about amid all the chaos that surrounds him, no other person is really qualified to discover the profound unity underlying those apparently more or less contradictory currents which are to be encountered on all sides. What he has to say, even though he may be accused of partipris, has the merit of being wholly impregnated with the spirit of the times. The reading of current works, for him, is rendered a living experience through his conversations with the authors, with the friends of the authors, with the friends of the friends of the authors, and so on. He knows the world of which he is a part not merely from the exterior, but through that intimate familiarity which he possesses with the feelings, the uncertainties and the problems which are essential at that particular moment and at that particular point in the universe.

For this reason, it does not seem to me impossible from now on, if not to draw a complete picture, at least to trace the general line of development of after-War literature in France, as seen by an observer who himself, willy-nilly, has been swept along by the flood.

The War, from the literary point of view, represents a caesura; for a number of years, writers produced less, busied as they were with other tasks; the publishers, moreover, lacked paper and workmen, as well as manuscripts. Many houses were shut down, many publications suspended or considerably reduced in size, "for the duration of hostilities." However, a whole country had not, for this reason, ceased thinking and feeling. Quite the contrary; fresh experiences were not lacking. Public opinion on all hands was assured that "many things are going to change," once peace had been reëstablished. That peace, so ardently longed for, appeared as the beginning of a new era, laden with hope and with infinite possibilities.

Here, nevertheless, we must recognize the fact that it has been the habit occasionally to attribute to the influence of the War alone certain transformations which may have had other more distant causes. If we apply to literature the comparison, trite enough but always suggestive, of a flowing river, it would seem that, from 1914 to 1918, that river had pursued a subterranean course; little by little and imperceptibly, its aspect, its hue and its composition had been modified, the more to surprise us the moment it came up again to the light of day. Something of a miracle may be seen in this; and yet, it is possible that this apparent suddenness conceals a

progressive travail carried on during the night. However real, indeed, may have been the upset due to those four years of paroxysm, the consequences undoubtedly would not have been the same with a nation trained to a different mode of thinking.

It is well, at this point, to recall the fact that the programs of secondary education in France had undergone a considerable modification in the year 1902, at the expense of the classic humanities and in favor of the sciences and the living tongues. For the results of an educational reform to become apparent, it is necessary to wait until the children affected by it shall have become men; from 1914 on, the generations which were due to come of age might have been expected to show the trace of the new reform; but—as we have seen—circumstances did not leave them the time for self-expression. Still, it was easy to make out the fact that in the *lycées* the number of pupils in the scientific courses had increased, whereas the literary courses were obviously losing ground. The great state schools, machines for turning out engineers, were from then on the highest aim of all bourgeois families. Since one was forced to choose his path in life earlier than theretofore, few hesitated to turn their sons toward what in modern civilization appeared to stand for the future, and which in any case brought with it the most immediate and the surest of practical advantages. The army itself, which in 1914 had naturally come to assume a place of primary importance in the public mind, now called for educated men capable of successfully conducting battles, in which the calculations of ballistics and the problems of mechanics or of chemistry played a greater part than strength of biceps or a knowledge of Latin. It was inevitable that children reared under these varied stresses should have felt their effects. The so-called "scientifics," by mere force of number, soon ceased to doubt their superiority over their "literary" classmates, and they even heaped contempt upon the latter. Naïve discussions were already to be heard between pupils in the primary classes over the comparative utility of letters, sciences and living languages. The memory, still glowing, of those *"lectures pour la jeunesse"* into which Jules Verne and his successors had poured their extraordinary inventive genius now won over to the side of mathematics a goodly number of those who were inclined to be dreamers, and who in another era would in all likelihood have sought out, rather, the company of poets. On the other hand, the twelve-year-old Hellenist no longer knew what answer to give those who inquired of him in a mocking tone: "What do you

expect to do with your Greek later? What use do you think it is going to be to you in after life?"

It is indispensable to recall these circumstances having to do with the intellectual formation of youth, if we are to clear up one of the aspects of present-day literature. The abandonment (noticed by Jacques Rivière) of the conception of "Art for Art's sake," dear to the Romantics, is thus easily enough explained. It is likewise well known that one of the first manifestations of the Dada movement was the questionnaire, "Why do you write?" sent out to a host of men of letters of all ages. In a sorrow-stricken world, wholly concerned with reëstablishing such values as had survived the catastrophe, writers felt the necessity of a frank self-examination. The aversion of the mob for those who, while hostilities were on, had been known as "slackers" (*embusqués*) led all those persons whose social utility was not at first blush apparent to be conscious of an imperious need of self-justification; or rather, of the need of strenuously denying the necessity of such a justification, which amounts to the same thing. The most conscientious of artists were thus to be heard assuring one that they turned out books for the reason that they felt incapable of practicing any other profession; others alleged a hidden weakness; still others asserted that they felt an irresistible urge to express their feelings or to defend their ideas. The concept of utility is a moral concept; it is not, therefore, astonishing that a part of the young writers of the day should have chosen as their more or less recognized master the one among their elders who, in his works, gives the most important place to ethical preoccupations: I am speaking of André Gide. The pure esthetic ideal, the ideal of formal perfection, no longer satisfied the needs of the hour. Disinterestedness was not, of course, banned; but preference was given to the disinterestedness of the scientist, the one who contributed by those means in his power to a knowledge of the universe. Hence, undoubtedly, the choice of another master, Marcel Proust; for the reason that the latter had made use of the novel to sound the depths of human nature and to follow up the discovery of those deep-lying laws that rule the inner life. Beside these two names that of Paul Valéry soon took its place, as the result of a vogue as rapid as it was startling; for Valéry, restraining his sensitivity, forced himself to look upon the most catastrophic events as simple sports (*jeux*) on the part of nature or of humanity; and so, he proceeded to the rehabilitation of poetry, a game *(jeu)* quite as worth while as any other, and more har-

monious than the majority of others. The poetic universe asserted its reality, and began once more to claim a precedence over the "prosaic universe," to which in the past it had been a matter of custom to abandon one's self.

Let us consider for the moment the psychologic significance of those four War years, which were especially violent ones for France, and after them, the influence of those economic uncertainties which marked the return of peace. Many contemporary chroniclers have before now called attention to the importance of these factors in the intellectual evolution of the country. Four years of abnormal living, constant anxieties, physical and moral suffering, material restrictions, danger and nervous tension could not fail to leave serious scars upon the mental life of a people. Following a remarkable article in a certain number of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* which appeared in 1924,[1] it became the habit to compare the "new *mal du siècle*" of our after-War youth to the "*mal du siècle*" of the Romantic generations, which likewise had grown up to the sound of cannon. An attempt has many times been made to list the causes of that unrest which for a number of years was a very noticeable feature of our literature, although it is now decreasing. But the War reacted in another not less important manner, and one which, I believe, has not been sufficiently noticed heretofore. From 1914 to 1918, the Frenchman had been subjectted to an intensive régime which the public ironically had christened "*le bourrage de crâne.*" By way of keeping up the confidence and the morale of the mob, the newspapers, rigorously censored for military reasons, formed the habit of stuffing their readers' minds with reassuring prognostics, describing each falling back of troops as a bit of clever strategy, and stirring up hatred of the enemy and a bellicose enthusiasm by means of a vulgarly bombastic eloquence. It is probable that nothing contributed more than this to developing in the young an irresistible taste for sincerity, even a brutal sincerity, a contempt for over-statement, and the desire of not permitting themselves to be duped either by words or by hollow sentimentality, all to the great scandal of more aged citizens, who had imbibed the milk of rhetoric in their cradles. Not long ago, a certain malicious critic made the statement that what characterized the young writers of today was, precisely, this "lack of rhetorical training *in the good sense of the word.*" Possibly because we do not understand what

[1] The article by Marcel Arland, given later in this section.

is meant by "the good sense of the word," we shall admit without being too much put out about the matter that there is an element of truth in this opinion.

Finally, peace burst upon us. I trust that the phrase "burst upon us" will not appear hyperbolic to those who witnessed in Paris the joyous excesses of the 11th of November, 1918. There followed a period of great relaxation; the *dancings,* the music-halls, the night clubs then began to enjoy their greatest popularity. For those of all professions who had been mobilized, the War had been a long and unpleasant vacation, following which it was hard to go back to work. A certain period of time was needed for the mind to grow accustomed to the idea that this new era, adorned with all the charms of paradise, brought with it at the same time the necessity of a plodding return to regular working habits. To connect up again with old traditions seemed like accepting a set of chains, and this was repugnant to the majority of those who were engaged in celebrating their new-found freedom. Then came Dada, which billed itself as a "demolition enterprise." Not only was there a desire to wipe out all traces of the War; there was likewise a desire to wipe out all that had led up to and ended in the cataclysm. It was not a question of beginning again; it was a question of beginning.

From then on, literature, a mirror of the times, was to reflect a need which never before, it may be, had attained so great a degree of intensity: a felt need on the part of each individual of taking stock, in the most clear-cut fashion possible, of his own existence, and afterward, of the existence of his environment. There was a need of feeling one's self alive, for the reason that one had the impression of having escaped a great danger, of having seen a portion of his life ruined, and was possessed of a passionate desire for making up lost time. Thus, the soldier, out on a leave that expired at midnight, even though he might be so sleepy that he could not stand up, simply could not bring himself to go back to barracks at nine o'clock in the evening, for the reason that he wished, up to the last minute and in all its fullness, to enjoy the sense of being free. In the same manner, the writer declined to permit himself to be lulled by such too usual phrases as are adapted to putting the consciousness painlessly to sleep. Poets and novelists rather strove to revivify the faded colors of the universe, the former by isolating their sensations in order to taste the flavor of them to the point of suffering, the latter by analyzing and decomposing with a minute precision everything that met their observing glance.

In each case, there was an attempt to get back to primary elements. The most secret content of the human soul, routed at last from its environing darkness, now flowered in apocalyptic visions under the inspired pens of the *Surréalistes*. These latter, successors to the Dadaists, of whom we have spoken above, set themselves to writing without "control," under the dictatorship of the unconscious; and by means of this process, allied to the automatic writing of Freudian psychanalysis, certain of them succeeded in filling their poems with an extraordinary dream-atmosphere. The concern of each was to bring into play the most original means in compelling human beings and things to yield a little more of their inmost essence or their outward appearances. The "interior monologue" came in, to afford us a new "slice of thought." An attempt was made to manufacture literary "scenarios," built upon the film model, by way of accentuating, through a heightened aridity of expression, the intensity of the vision invoked. But like a mirage in the desert, Reality, thus feverishly pursued, receded and crumbled in direct ratio to the efforts made to overtake her. Man, confronted by his own personality, now finds himself in the state of the child, who, spurred by an instinctive curiosity, has taken his mechanical plaything to pieces and does not know how to put it together again. The scientist sees Nature, which has been his study, growing sterile under his scalpel; irrational and relativist theories, contrary to all admitted conceptions, step in to revolutionize the aspect of the world; mysterious forces arise on all hands; invisible currents, the power of which is becoming every day more manifest: waves plowing through space and carrying to a distance the words, images and will of man. It is no longer amid the arbitrary inventions of the imagination, but in the spectacle of daily life that literature is finding the elements of a new fantasy. Science is a perpetual source of disturbing wonders, and even mathematics, however abstract it may be, would appear to sink its roots into the obscure depths of the unknown.

A certain number of writers set themselves to exploring the soul and the contemporary world; travelers like Morand visit a rediscovered Europe, then the other portions of the globe, reporter's notebook in hand. Exoticism is no longer a pretext for vague nostalgic dreams; the public itself demands, first of all, concrete and definite information. Since the cinema has placed at our disposition its own long-sighted eyes, there is no longer any need for interminable literary descriptions; what is wanted is, rather, the small detail which confers the illusion of being actually present, or

else, psychologic information, thanks to which it becomes possible to compare the inhabitant of the distant country with ourselves.

However, beside this tendency to a deepening of our knowledge (psychic, physical, geographic, etc.), there is manifest yet another. The poets are the first to perceive that too clear a consciousness and too extensive a degree of comprehension, even though they may bring us intellectually nearer to Reality, on the other hand tend to diminish in us the sensation of Reality itself. Just as, when we wish to form a judgment of a painter's picture, we must, as every one knows, fall back a few paces instead of coming up to it with a magnifying glass. The more inexplicable the effect, the more potent it will be. This is why a large part of modern poetry prefers to make use of that which still resists explanation, that which escapes analysis. Surely enough, such a quest is anything but propitious to a grand-scale lyricism; but out of the unexpected shocks that arise between images and words, an emotion is born that is valuable, often weird and occasionally disturbing, being marked sometimes by a very subtle grace, of which Jean Cocteau has given us many examples.

It is, undoubtedly, in these indefinable and indecomposable elements that we are to see what the Abbé Brémond, in the course of a recent controversy, termed *"la poésie pure."* About the same time, there was much talk about the *"cinéma pur."* This desire to *purify* every art, and to isolate that which constitutes its essence, is one of the characteristics of the period. It is to be remarked that this concern exists side by side with the greatest confusion of literary genres that France has ever witnessed; many works of the years that followed the War deserve to be classified almost indiscriminately as novels, poems or essays. But the purity called for is not a matter of composition or of formula; whether we are dealing with poetry, the cinema or some other technique, purity is nothing other than that quality which moves us directly, without the intervention of the usual train of feelings, ideas, and acquired notions such as are to be found in the depths of our being. An harmonious decorative ensemble, for example, affects us even when it suggests nothing, and when it is susceptible to no sort of interpretation. The data of the intelligence and the feelings are "impure," in the sense that they are reared like screens between the object and the artist. From this point of view, the desire to "understand" certain works comes as a psychologic deformation, which runs the risk of veiling the

real beauty of those works, a beauty which, on the other hand, is immediately perceptible to an unprejudiced mind.

In the midst of a material civilization that is becoming more and more highly developed, there is visible a definitely outlined impulse to retrieve for man the spontaneity of his primitive impressions. Reason and logic are battered in the breach by certain writers, accused as they are of being aribtrary products of the intelligence, of education and of literature (this last term to be taken in its most general and perjorative acceptation). René Crevel even goes so far as to draw up a formal accusation, in his *"L'esprit contre la Raison."* Thought freed from those molds within which it has been confined by purely practical exigencies is henceforward to appear in all its complexity, with all its innumerable contradictions, which a more flexible psychology no longer looks upon as being in any manner incompatible.

In all domains, one of the great tasks undertaken by the writer of today has been the freeing of the mind. Man revolts even against his own determinism and suffers at being its plaything, while the novelist finds consolation by imagining for his characters the possibility of *"actes gratuits,"* unforeseen and practically unforeseeable actions which tend to break the traditional chain of gestures and of ideas. How many modern novel-heroes are there who surprise us with their sudden decisions for which we have been prepared by no previous hesitation on their part? From the moment that after-the-War society began organizing like a machine in order to obtain the most effective economic and industrial results, literture became aware of a more and more imperative necessity: that of safeguarding intellectual independence. It was not to be deceived by the mirage of "modern convenience" *(confort moderne);* and it no longer accorded Europe an unquestioned spiritual predominance in the world. The question was first raised on the moral plane, in connection with the relations between the Orient and Occident. It is our whole system of civilization that is brought into question; the evidence is piling up, and the defenders and assailers of the present state of affairs are confronting one another. All values are challenged, discussed and criticized. And it is at this point that Politics—which up to then had played a rôle apart—enters literature. Little by little, we are witnessing the preparations for a new period of evolution; and little by little, we are entering upon a second phase of literary development.

Down to the last few years, the young writer, taken up with observing his own reactions, had formed the habit of thinking only in terms of himself. And here, perhaps, it is that we come upon one of the principal causes of that "unrest of the century" which has been the occasion of so much spilled ink. In this connection, Daniel-Rops has called attention to what he terms the "Hamletism" of our era: that is to say, a loss of that "sense of objective" which is indispensable to activity of any kind. As a matter of fact, a vaguely anarchic tendency, coupled with a thorough-going religious agnosticism, has kept the young from directing their glances outward, and from going forth to meet life with confidence. As a result of a desire to determine his own existence, to feed his own *fervor,* to experience his own *possibilities,* the young man of the day has come more and more to avoid movement. Indeed, many of the Romantic characters of this period would appear to have evolved without any profession, in a society in which money did not count. It is possible that the after-War inflation and the easy spending which resulted during those years was the thing that led to this excessively indifferent attitude. It is, likewise permissible to suppose that the second phase of literary development stems, practically, from that day in 1926, when France, threatened by a terrible financial crisis, adopted a policy of economy and retrenchment; money becoming scarcer, the individual felt obliged to take account of immediate and practical necessities; up to that time, he had been able to discuss, in superior fashion, the value of any sort of activity; whereas now, above all such discussions, there was a sudden and pressing necessity to act, for purely material reasons. And so, it was natural that thought-processes, without any modification in their general direction, should take on new forms and show the effect of the new paths they were being compelled to follow. There was a decided change in the character of essential preoccupations.

Practically all the spiritual problems that were raised following the establishment of peace were preceded by the interrogation: *Why?* The young put the anguished question to themselves: "Why go on living?" And to this, the writer added: "Why go on writing?" And in truth, that "Why" is the first question that comes to the lips of an awakening world; and the self-questionings of the generations which had recently come to maturity accordingly found expression in a quest of "reasons for being." Each became deeply aware of his own inner disorder; and—as M. Arland notes—the thing was, depending upon individual reactions, "either to subdue

it by means of *some empiric rather than reasoned mysticism, or to affirm it to the point of the absolute.*" For never before had man been at once so intensely conscious of the need and of the lack of an absolute of any kind. The response to the countless "whys" were uncertain, from want of a common basis of discussion. Upon all human explanations there rests a primordial doubt, which is only to be resolved by an act of faith or a pragmatic acceptance. The writers of the *"Philosophies"* group had prophesied the advent of a great metaphysical Truth, which it was to be their function to proclaim, but which remains as yet in a vague and distant future. Among those who were endeavoring to find an escape, some took refuge in a return to Catholicism, others in the hope of a vast social transformation, others still—and these were numerous—in the election of a "modern humanism," etc. The reign of "Why?" now began to be followed by the reign of "How?"; the quest of causes gave way to a search for "modalities," a quest which, being of a more practical nature, was less conductive to Unrest. The question now was: "How to live? How to write?" and also, how to reconcile life with thought.

Already, with some, Uncertainty, mother of anxiety, had been effaced by the certainty of the imminent Worst; the "Why?" being a question no longer possessed of any meaning (since the only answer that could be given it was a "for no reason at all"), the thing to do was to accept either suicide or existence, and with very rate exceptions, the instinct of self-preservation proved the stronger. From now on, in any event, the solution sought was to be a concrete one, and joy or sorrow were to depend solely upon the temperament of the individual, without reference to any theory as to humanity's goal. A poet such as Blaise Cendrars succeeds in escaping the torment of his era, for the reason that poetry with him consists of movement and not in passive contemplation. His sensitivity, far from going in upon itself, flowers in a perpetual wonderment. "The Ocean-Letter," he writes in his *Feuilles de route,* "is not made for poetry. But when one is traveling, when one is buying, selling and bargaining, when one is aboard ship, when one sends Ocean-Letters, one is making poetry." His is not an escape from modern civilization; he feeds on it all, delights in it, submits "to the principle of utility," not because he is avid for money or for fame, but because "the principle of utility is the most entrancing and possibly the sole expression of that law of intellectual consistency of which Remy de Gourmont had a glimpse." There are,

it may be seen, certain minds which feel no need of a metaphysical assurance in order to go on living an intensely active, colorful and enthusiastic life. Ramon Fernandez, for his part and for philosophic reasons, had preached a "humanism of action."[2] "One is beginning to take account of the fact," he assures us, "that the point of view of action is the only one from which it is possible to look at individual man, in his entirety and in his original reality." This phrase suffices to show that there is no question whatever of a renunciation, in favor of action, of all the gifts that modern psychology has brought to us. It is not a question of abandoning anything, but rather of a unifying synthesis, destined to bring an end to that sort of interior "crumbling" which is so piteous, and which is revealed, if not provoked, by an excessively minute analysis. Jean Prévost has similarly drawn up his indictment of "Introspection," which is a vain thing in his eyes, if the object of introspection be not incessantly renewed through external activity. Following this, it was natural to look to athletics, representing an harmonious balance of body and mind, for the best means of adapting one's self sanely to the conditions of a society whose general tendency would appear to be to reduce the individual's power and initiative, to the profit of the material group-interests.

And so, it was toward sport and its moral discipline that Henry de Montherlant first turned upon leaving the Catholic church. But an appetite growing ever more insatiable soon led him to adopt as a system of ethics a wider formula, which he sums up in the two words: "Syncretism and alternance." Desirous "of exhausting life," but too ardent to be content with the incomplete and melancholy satisfactions of the sceptical dilettante, too ardent also to resign himself to immobility or a marking-time, he made up his mind to respond, *utterly* but *successively,* to the contradictory appeals of his sensitivity. The model which he holds up for our admiration is the philosopher, Peregrinus, who died for an ideal in which he did not believe. Persuaded of the necessity of an objective for human life, but incapable of admitting the absolute superiority of any one thing over other things, Montherlant prefers to pursue all objectives in turn, without reservations of any kind. What fault is to be found with any one choice of his, seeing that he does not pretend to justify it by any other argument than his own good pleasure? He thus will come to know all the attitudes, but he will

[2] See the essay by this title, later in the section.

never have any illusions about any of them. And it is in this manner that he finds a way to reconcile the demands of a critical intelligence with an impetuosity that is anything but compatible with the stagnation of a too perfect disillusionment.

Many other writers have attempted to find a purely personal solution in the form of activity. And it is here that politics most often enters the equation; the Communistic evolution of the *Surréalistes* —the fundamental principle of *Surréalisme* being individualistic and anarchistic—is a remarkable sign of the times. Boutros, Drieu La Rochelle's hero in *Une femme à sa fenêtre,* is a striking type of the young bourgeois-intellectual-revolutionary, in reality more concerned with himself than with the cause for which he struggles so parlously. The desire to "revivify the faded colors of the universe" herewith takes on a novel aspect, and, in the case of certain writers, passes over from the speculative to the active plane. We find some of the writing young submitting to a party-program; and Emmanuel Berl is to be seen breaking lances against the stubborn "conformity" of contemporary society. According to Berl, writers and artists as well as bureaucrats of narrow outlook continue to conform to customs and to a tradition which are out of harmony with the present conditions of life. "We intellectuals," he says, "have not yet done with our rôle; we still have mankind to defend." His two first pamphlets, *"Mort de la pensée bourgeoise,"* and *"Mort de la morale bourgeoise,"* if they only serve to bring confusion into the domain of the positive, are none the less symptoms of a vigorous renewal of the struggle against the "accepted," and this time upon a field where a battle has never before been staged. Berl rushes into politics, not because he has been won over by an external ideal, but for the reason that he sees in revolutionary activity an essential *must* of the mind.

The truth is that, from 1918 to the present time, the need of some sort of intellectual morality had become more and more imperative, amid the initial disorientation, and later amid all the various efforts at individual and social reorganization. We have noticed the fact that, from the first after-War years, the young writer, faced by a general overthrow of existing values and the collapse of all absolutes, had preserved in spite of it all, as the supreme object of his aspirations, at least one intellectual virtue: sincerity. Later on, when the man of letters, putting aside metaphysical concerns, came to ask himself the question *how* he was to live and in what manner he was to act, he perceived that this question admitted

of a twofold answer: one from the man, and the other from the thinker; it was at this time that Julien Benda's *Trahison des clercs* came to give him a renewed awareness of his rôle as a defender of the things of the mind and spirit, and alongside his personal ethics, there was gradually reared a system of professional ethics. Benda strongly accused the *clercs* (artists, novelists, philosophers, priests) of having failed in their mission, by having placed their intelligence at the service of the material powers, and by having frequently accepted, during the War, propagandistic and utilitarian tasks. In M. Benda's eyes, those *clercs* who were the traitors *par excellence* were, undoubtedly, the journalists who, in place of keeping intellectual interests above all the contingencies of the moment, made vulgar coin of it to the profit of some special cause or other. Before him, Georges Philippe Friedmann, in the course of a magazine article, had announced that his contemporaries had lost "the eternal side of themselves." Benda, violently rationalistic and intellectualistic, took up the accusation and, armed with proofs, proceeded to attack what he denounced as the modern writer's incapacity to view ideas independently of time and custom.

The countless reactions provoked by this work go to prove its importance and its opportuneness. There was plenty of discussion, and M. Benda's thesis was plentifully contradicted; but in the meanwhile, the problem of the writer's mission was brought to the front, inasmuch as it was upon this head that the disagreement arose. For it was in behalf of intellectual Interests that everybody took occasion to speak. What line of conduct should the *Clerc* pursue, if he was not to be a traitor? It was about this question that the controversy raged. Benda's response in substance had been that it was the business of the *Clerc* to devote himself to pure speculation, without any concern for action. Berl and a number of others were of a different opinion; according to them, the *Clerc,* if he was to remain faithful to his behest, was under the obligation to give his thought a practical application, to carry it to the point where, finding itself solitary, it became a peril for the one who had undertaken to be its defender. Jean Guehenno made himself the mouthpiece of the people, whom he incarnates in his book[3] under the guise of Shakespeare's Caliban, by declaring: "The unspeakable baseness of our age lies in its confusionism . . . A distinction is no longer made between the values of civilization and mere size,

[3] A selection from this work is given later on.

between riches and wisdom." As he sees it, the first duty of the intellect can be none other than to struggle against this "confusionism," by all the means within one's power and upon every conceivable plane.

As may be seen, above the scepticism, the nihilism and all the occasions for anxiety, there is one value which has survived the flood, against which it would seem that all the material forces had been let loose in vain. The Mind has held out against the tornado; the War had demanded its abdication in favor of the necessities of the moment, but it has arisen once more with a vigor increased by its sufferings. There can be no doubt that all those who call themselves its defenders do not entertain the same conception of it. The word *"Esprit"* does not stand for the same thing to the deist and the atheist, but outside of metaphysics, the two are in agreement as to its supremacy. There is no question that, when the Catholic Jacques Maritain asserts "the primacy of the spiritual," his line of thought is quite different from and not to be confused with that of Maurice Heine, when the latter dedicates a new edition of one of the Marquis de Sade's books "To my Surréalist friends, who are engaged in courageously upholding and defending this intellectual revenge *(revanche de l'esprit)*." As a corollary, materialism in its vulgar form (the result of science's first audacious steps, is almost extinct. The deepening of our knowledge of psychology, the more and more complex and less and less positive manner in which the physical world appears to the scientist's gaze, the uncertainty of the scientist with regard to the very nature of matter itself, all tend to forbid explanations which are a bit too simple. We now know that there are too many varied elements that enter into the equation.

With such a background, the old discussion concerning the relation of the Orient and the Occident bobs up again under another form; and anxious minds are to be heard proclaiming the peril of mechanization, and the risk that the human consciousness there runs of being swallowed up. A translation has just been published of Rabindranath Tagore's *The Machine,* with a preface by Marc Elmer, and this work comes as a veritable shout of alarm. For it is toward the future that distrustful glances are now being turned; and Georges Duhamel, following his visit to the slaughter-houses of Chicago, conceives a naïve terror at what he takes to be an apocalyptic vision of the life to come. The problem of the Orient versus the Occident, being given a new lease on life, is transformed

into the problem of "Europe versus America," despite the fact that, for the vast majority, "Europe" and "America" remain abstract terms, upon which they confer a purely arbitrary meaning, the one that pleases them best. However, travelers are setting out for the United States in greater numbers than ever before; symposiums, reporters' accounts and travelers' notebooks are becoming more plentiful all the time; and from out the extreme diversity of opinions expressed, we are at last beginning to get at something that is probably a little nearer the truth. As for the Frenchman, more worried from now on over his fate than he is over his reasons for being, he takes an ever-increasing pleasure in a rich documentary literature, and in those numerous essayists' compilations which bring him intellectual material that is immediately utilizable.

A constructive need is widely felt on the part of the younger generations; but how is one to set about the work of construction? The writer of today is not prone to begin over again what has been done before him, and against which his revolt was staged. He cannot reject the data of his critical and analytical intelligence; and the majority of the old "absolutes" from which he has freed himself are no longer calculated to satisfy him. A consciousness of the infinite complexity of all things is, assuredly, of no practical advantage to him; and yet, he cannot bring himself to give it up. The thought of our age is, on the whole, relativistic. The difficulty lies in erecting a substantial structure upon foundations which, in appearance, are far from stable. Biases, prejudices, conventions might seem to afford firm enough bases; but none will admit the possibility of sacrificing Mind to comfort, not even moral comfort.

A triple manifesto entitled *"Voie Libre"* and signed by Philippe Lamour, Joe Bousquet and Carlo Suarès announces that "from now on, the way is open; you are invited to take it." This manifestation is especially interesting as evidencing an effort to discover new absolutes in the midst of this, our relativistic universe, an effort to put the life of the individual and of society upon a sincere and enlightened basis. Philippe Lamour is concerned with organizing society in such a manner as to permit the greatest possible development of the individual, who constitutes the sole reflection of Being. Joe Bousquet, repudiating all metaphysical hope, assumes to discover in the present moment, and in the magical, incoherent and *contemporary* depths of our "ego," that aliment which his spirit craves—a craving for the light of the absolute. According to Carlo Suarès, finally, what prevents our discovering the absolute and eternal aspect

of things (objective as well as subjective) is our childish habit of attributing a character of permanence to what is no more than the artificial result of our abstract intelligence. In his opinion, one only draws near those inexhaustible sources of happiness and well-being by remaining faithful to the *movement* of life, and by making ourselves, so to speak, a part of that movement.

The esoteric character of these manifestoes has greatly interfered with the diffusion of the ideas behind them; but we must grant them a symptomatic importance. Other currents, of a more concrete nature, are to be found running parallel to them, and would seem to be bearing down upon a sort of positive relativism, or, if you like, an eclectic realism. "That the truth is relative is an absolute truth," M. André Maurois has subtly remarked. The important thing is to make due allowance for the relative, to steer clear of deceptive generalizations and verbal confusions; it may be that we shall have to discover the absolute not in things but in those relations which bind things together. In place of attributing an eternal and universal significance to each of his ideas, the realist of today would recognize the special and provisory character of his own judgments; he insists upon knowing clearly "with relation to what" he utters those judgments. Through a better comprehension of the relative, he is destined to come nearer to a living Reality, and, as a consequence, to the real absolute.

At first glimpse, all these philosophic themes may seem somewhat foreign to the domain of literature; but they are not, at all, for the reason that contemporary literature is very often merely a means utilized by the individual in his attempt to attain a spiritual equilibrium. The ethical tendences of the contemporary writer are implicit in the principles which he enunciates, where aesthetics holds a very small place indeed. Even when he believes that he is reacting against the age, even when he appears disposed to join forces with an older tradition, he is in the habit of falling back upon moral arguments. The apostles of Populism, by way of example, assert the necessity of the writer's choosing his models from among the people, but their reason, as they insist, is that they are against those "vicious and idle" characters to be found in present-day works.

It must be confessed that, in the early after-War period, the novels turned out were often like collections of impressions; they were by way of being poems of unrest: usually short volumes, with a single character (not unlike the author). Turned inward upon

himself, occupied with taking a census of his sensations and feelings, uncertain of his own will, the "hero" was inclined to give in to, rather than attempt to direct, circumstances; it is to this period that the early novels of Philippe Soupault, Drieu La Rochelle, etc., belong.

But as the mind and the literature of the era evolved, a need was felt for bringing back the old Romantic hero into active life. Books became longer, since the writer was now bent upon giving a complete picture of his character, not a mere subjective slant. M. Arland's *L'Ordre,* M. Daniel-Rops' *L'Ame Obscure* and yet other works showed us "modern heroes" in their relations to their families, their friends, and to society, with a set of definite circumstances in the face of which they were forced to make decisions. We have already spoken of the "How" as following the "Why" phase. The majority of characters now have a profession as well as a life of their own; and we have Philippe Soupault, revising his earlier manner, giving us books laden with adventures —now the tale of an uncanny negro musician, now the life-story of a great automobile manufacturer who had "begun at the bottom and worked his way up." Jean Prévost in *Les Frères Bouquinquant,* gives us a drama the characters of which are day laborers. As narratives become more objective, their documentary character grows. André Malraux brings us back from the Far-East novels in which we find human masses in place of individuals in confrontation with one another. His *Les Conquerants* may rightly be looked upon as an epic. Literature shakes off the accusation of "conformity" which has been brought against it, and is now doing its best to give us the likeness of a new world, the life of the world that is to be seen all over the face of the globe. Modern realism finds expression in a psychology that is a good deal more complex, that has more body to it.

Contemporary French literature, less fed on classic tradition than formerly, as a result of the change in educational curricula, has, as a result of those same curricula, been brought all the more under the influence of other literatures of today. Translations of foreign authors have multiplied for some time past, and in this new turn given to literary curiosity may be seen a pledge of youth and of enduring activity. Superficially, our output of the last few years may seem lacking in originality as compared with the years that immediately followed the War; but it still bears witness to an effort which, while not so brilliant, is none the less fresh in spirit:

a daring effort at synthesis and equilibrium, with the aid of those countless and often contradictory elements which are the result of a preceding and thoroughly analytic disassociation of values.

If one were to wind up as the rules prescribe, it would doubtless have to be with some prognostics concerning the future; but that is a perilous sport and, when all is said, a puerile one. An optimist would take the occasion to paint a large rose-hued fresco, while the pessimist would bring forth a little gloom-smeared canvas. It is to a certain extent true that the future depends upon the present, but it depends still more upon the thousand and one events which may arise out of the unknown. It is possible to diagnose an individual as being alive at a given moment, but it is not possible to assure him that he will be better off, or any the less well off, two or three days later. And so, for today, let us be content with the diagnosis that, on the threshold of 1931, French literature is still alive and effervescing.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

TWO PRECURSORS

NOTES ON PRECURSORS

The Precursors of the after-War literature, in large part French, have been dealt with in the General Introduction to the present work. Proust and Gide, in particular, have been stressed; and in an exhaustive view, specimens from the work of each would have to be given. Proust, however, has been almost completely translated, as has the later Gide. Nevertheless, extracts from Gide's *Les Nourritures Terrestres* (1897) should be given, just as, to be exhaustive, one should present extracts from Valéry's *La Soirée avec M. Teste* (1896) and from the *Introduction à la Méthode de Léonard de Vinci* (1894—accessible in English), etc. But the truth is, once started on this track, it would be hard stopping. There are Bergson and the philosophic predecessors. There is the Comte de Lautréamont, ancestor of the Surréalistes, whose *Chants de Maldoror* have been superbly done into English by Mr. John Rodker. There is Alfred Jarry, author of the quite untranslatable *Ubu roi,* which has had a wide influence upon his countrymen. There is Germain Nou-

veau, who really came to light in 1910, and there is Charles Cros. There are Apollinaire's literary-Cubist associates, André Salmon and Max Jacobs. There is Gustave Kahn ("inventor" of free verse). There are figures who belong partly to Symbolism and partly to a more modern movement whom it might be of interest to present, and there are others, like Léon-Paul Fargue (the bulk of whose published work comes before 1919) who, while they are writing still (Salmon, possibly, falls into this class), might be said to belong almost more to that period of fermentation and of germination which preceded the armistice than to the after-War epoch. But when the thing is simmered down, the two immediate and significant precursors are found to be Apollinaire and Cocteau. The former, dying on the eve of the Armistice, was the *animateur* of that modernity which we know today, while Cocteau likewise, owing, as he does, something to Apollinaire, will be discovered, from the *Le Potomak* extracts given below, to have anticipated more than one stream or tendency. These often prophetic-sounding intimations need not be pointed out in either case; they should be sufficiently obvious. As for Apollinaire, it is to be regretted that the typographical audacities of his *Calligrammes* are not reproducible in translation.

Guillaume Apollinaire

Guillaume Apollinaire (Wilhelm Kostrowitzky), of Polish descent, was born, or christened, at Rome in August, 1880, and educated at Monaco and at Nice. His Wanderjahre *were spent in Germany. Upon coming to Paris, he made the discovery of Douanier Rousseau, Cubism, negro art, etc. He entered the War in 1914 and wrote poetry all the while. He was wounded and underwent a trepanation. His "super-realist drama" (note the use of the word,* surréaliste*), entitled* Les Mamelles de Tirésias, *was produced in 1917. He died of the Spanish influenza, on November 10, 1918.*

Apollinaire was noted for his erudition, his aesthetic foresight and daring, his love of mystification, his imaginative and creative gifts and a certain very human, even popular verve. His first verse volume, Alcools *(published, with a portrait by Picasso, in 1913, republished 1920), shows an influence of the American Whitman.* Calligrammes *(with a portrait by Picasso, 1918), from which the following poems are taken, has had a very great, not always acknowledged influence upon typographical moderinism in poetry. It was much imitated up to about 1920, when the Dadaists revolted against*

Apollinaire. The tendency now is somewhat to "play down," or at least effectually to overlook, the author of Calligrammes *and the man who coined the word* Surréalisme. *Apollinaire, on the other hand, slowly but surely is being recognized, by reason of the beauty, simplicity and human quality of his work, as one of the great poets of modern times.*

In addition to the works mentioned, the Apollinaire bibliography is as follows: L'Enchanteur Pourrissant, *woodcuts by André Derain, published 1909, republished 1921;* L'Hérésiarque et Cie., *1910;* Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée, *woodcuts by Raoul Dufy, published 1911, republished 1921;* Les Peintres Cubistes, *1912;* Le Poète Assassiné, *colored cover by Capiello, portrait of the author by André Rouveyre, 1916;* Vitam Impendere Amori, *eight drawings by André Rouveyre, 1917. The text of* Les Mamelles de Tirésias, *with the drawings of Serge Ferat and the music, was published in 1918. Besides these works are to be listed the* Case d'Armons *(twenty-five hectograph copies in violet ink run off before the enemy's batteries on June 17, 1915) and the* Couleur du Temps *(1920) and certain poems of a rakish character that appeared without the author's name.*

From *CALLIGRAMMES*

I

ON THE HILLSIDES

Above Paris one day
Two great planes were fighting
One was red and the other black
While at the zenith blazed
The eternal solar plane

One was my youth
And the other was the future
They fought furiously
As against Lucifer
The Archangel with radiant wings

As arithmetic the problem
As night against the day
So does my love attack
That which I love as the hurricane
Uproots the shrieking tree

But see how calm the day
Paris like a young girl
Languorously awakes
Shakes out her long locks
And sings her own sweet song

Where then is my youth gone
You can see the future flame
Know that I speak today
To announce to all the world
The art of prophecy is born at last

Certain men are hills
That rise up among men
And see afar the future whole
Better than if it were the present
Clearer than if it were the past

Embellishment of times and ways
Passing endures and does not stop
Let the serpents hiss
Vainly against the south wind
The Psylli and the wave have perished

In the order of time if machines
Should start to think at last
Upon the jeweled beaches
Golden waves would break
The sea would still be pure

Less high than man go the eagles
It is he who is the joy of oceans
As he disperses in the air
The shadows and the dizzy spleens
By which the mind attains to dream

The days of magic are at hand
They're coming back expect
A billion marvels that have never
Given rise to any fable
Since no one has conceived them

Depths of consciousness
They will explore you tomorrow
And who knows what living beings
Shall be drawn out of that abyss
Along with whole universes

Behold here prophets rise
As do the blue hillsides afar
They shall know things definite
That savants think they know
And they shall bear us everywhere

The great force is desire
And come that I may kiss your forehead
O one light as flame
With all the endurance of flame
All the ardor and all the glow

The time shall come in which our study shall be
The meaning that the word to suffer holds
It will not be a matter of courage
Nor yet of renunciation
Nor anything that lies within our power

They shall look in man himself
Far deeper than they've looked before
They shall scrutinize his will
And that strength which is born of will
Without mechanism and without instrument

The vagabond resources
And interpenetrant among us
Since the days that overtake us
Nothing ends and nothing begins
Look at the ring on your finger

Days of deserts of thoroughfares
Days of public squares and hills
I come here to do tricks
Where a talisman plays his part
Dead but more subtile than life itself

I am freed at last
Of all natural things
I can die but cannot sin
And what man has never touched
I have touched I have felt

I have scrutinized that which none
Ever could imagine
And I have many times weighed in my hand
Even life the imponderable
I can die with a smile

Often I have flown so high
That it was good-by to all things
To phantoms and to stranger fashions
And I no longer will admire
The lad who mimics terror

It's good-by to time's jasmine youth
I have breathed your cool fragrance
At Rome upon the flowering floats
Laden with masks with garlands
And the jingle bells of carnival

It's good-by to white Christmas
When life was but a star
The reflection of which I view
In the waters of the Mediterranean
Pearlier far than meteors

Downy as an archangel's nest
In its garland of clouds
And more lustrous than halos
Emanations and splendors
Single sweet savour harmonies

I stop to look
At the incandescent greensward
A wandering serpent that is myself
Who follow the flute I play
And the whip that lashes others

There comes a time for suffering
There comes a time for benevolence
Good-by youth the time is here
When one shall know the future
Shall know and shall not die

It is a time of ardent grace
The will alone shall 'act
Seven years of unbelieveable tests
Man shall make himself divine
Purer sprightlier and more skilled

He shall discover other worlds
The mind languishes like flowers
From which savoury fruits are born
Which we watch ripen
On the sun-drenched hillside

I tell you what life really is
Only I could sing like this
My songs fall like seeds
Keep silent all of you who sing
Don't mingle tares with the wheat

A vessel comes into port
A great and flag-decked ship
But we find no one aboard it
But a beautiful woman rosy-hued
Who lies there murdered

Another time I went begging
They gave me but a flame
That burned me to the lips
And I could not say thank you
Torch that none can extinguish

Where are you now O my friend
Who are so at home in yourself
Now that a single gulf is left
Where I have hurled myself
Down to the colorless depths

The dance whirls on in the depths of time
I have slain the handsome orchestra-leader
And I peel for my friends
The orange whose taste is
A marvelous fireworks

All are dead the maître d'hotel
Pours them an unreal champagne
Which bubbles like a snail
Or a poet's brain
While the rose was singing

The slave holds a bared sword
Like the springs and like the rivers
And each time that it descends
A universe is disemboweled
And from it new worlds leap

The chauffeur is at the wheel
And each time that along the way
He blows his horn in rounding a curve
His diminishing figure seems
A universe yet virgin

And the third number is the lady
She goes up in the elevator
She goes up up up
And the light unfolds
And its brightness transfigures her

And I can hear my returning steps
Along the paths that none
Has traveled I hear my steps
Constantly passing down there
Slow or in haste they come or go

Winter you who shave your beard
It snows and I am unhappy
I have crossed the gleaming sky
Where life is a music
The ground is too white for my eyes

Become used like me
To these marvels that I proclaim
To the benevolence that is to reign
To the suffering that I endure
And you shall know the future

It is of suffering and benevolence
That beauty shall be wrought
More beautiful than that
Which was built upon proportions
It snows and I burn and tremble

Now I am at my desk
I write what I have felt
And what I have sung up there
A slender tree that sways
To the wind with the fleeing tresses

A top-hat is upon
A fruit-laden table
The gloves are inanimate near an apple
A lady twists her neck
Beside a gentleman engaged in swallowing

But these are little secrets
There are other deeper ones
Soon to be revealed
And thy shall make of you a hundred bits
To the thought ever one

But weep weep and weep again
And let the moon be full
Or let it be but a crescent moon
Ah! weep weep and weep again
We have so laughed in the sun

Golden arms are upholding life
Fathom the gilded secret
All is but a swift flame
Where flowers the adorable rose
From which arises an exquisite perfume.

II

APRIL NIGHT 1915

The sky is starred by the Boches' shells
The wonder-forest where I live is giving a ball
The machine-gun plays a demi-semiquaver air
But have you the word
Ah! yes the fatal word
To the dugouts To the dugouts Leave your pick-axes there

Like a lost star that goes searching its seasons
Heart a burst shell you whistle your ditty
And your myriad suns have emptied the caissons
Which the gods of my eyes in silence replenish

We love you O life and we worry you

The shells are meeowing a love about to die
A love that dies is sweeter than the others
Your breath floats on the river where blood will be drying

The shells are meeowing
Hear the song of ours
A purple love greeted by those who are about to die

The watch-light attacks the damp springtime

It rains my soul it rains but it's raining dead eyes

Ulysses how many days to Ithaca

Lie down upon the straw and dream a beautiful remorse
And for the sake of art let it be an aphrodisiac

But
organs
on the wisps of straw where you sleep
The hymn of the future is a paradisiac.

III

VICTORY

A cock crows I dream and the Branches shake
Their leaves which are like poor sailors

Winged and whirling like Icarus the scythes
Of the blind gestulate like ants
See themselves in the rain-lights on the sidewalk

Their laughs heaped in grape-clusters

Leave my house no more speaking diamond
Sleep calmly you are at home all is yours
My cot my lamp and my helmet with its holes

Glances precious sapphires carved in the neighborhood
of Saint-Claude
The days were a pure emerald
I remember you meteoric city
They flowered in the air those nights when nothing slept

Gardens of light where I have plucked bouquets

You ought to have enough to frighten that sky
Let him keep his hiccups

It is difficult to imagine
How calm and stupid success renders folks

At the institute for blind youth they asked
Haven't you a blind youth with wings?

O mouths man is in search of a new language
To which the grammarian of no language shall have anything to say

For those old tongues are so near to death
That it is really out of habit and from lack of daring
That we still make them serve for poetry.

But they are like invalids with no will of their own

My word but people would quickly become used to dumbness
Mimicry is enough for the cinema.

But let us stubbornly keep on speaking
Let us stir up language
Let us fly kite-tails
We want new sounds new sounds new sounds
We want consonants without vowels
Consonants that explode dully
Imitate the sound of the top
A prolonged crackling nasal sound
Clack your tongue
Imitate the noise of the bad-mannered eater
The aspirate scrape of an expectoration would likewise make a fine consonant

The various labial *pets* would also render your speech bugle-like
Grow used to belching at will
And that letter grave as the sound of a bell
Across our memories

We do not love joy enough
To see the beautiful new things
Hasten dear lady
Lest one day a train fail to move you
Any more

See it is too fast for you
Those moving railroads
Will soon emerge from life
They will be beautiful and ridiculous

Two lamps burn in front of me
Like a pair of laughing women
I sadly bow my head
Before an ardent derision
That laugh spreads

Everywhere
Talk on your hands snap your fingers
Beat on your cheek like a drum
O words
They follow into the myrtle-hedge
Eros and Anteros in tears
I am the city's sky

Listen to the sea
The sea moaning afar and crying all alone
My voice faithful as the shades
Would be at last the shades of life
Would be O living sea faithless as you

The sea which has betrayed unnumbered sailors
Swallowed up my great cries like drowning gods
And the sea in the sun knows but the shadows
That birds with their spread wings drop

The word is sudden and a trembling god
Come and support me I regret the hands
Of those who stretched them forth and worshiped me
What oasis of arms shall receive me tomorrow
Do you know the joy that lies in beholding new things

O voice I speak the language of the sea
And in port at night the last taverns
I who am more headstrong than the hydra of Lerna.

The street where my two hands swim
With subtle fingers rummaging the town
Goes away but who knows if tomorrow
The street became motionless
Who knows where my road would be

Think how railroads
Shall be out of fashion and abandoned in a little while
Look

Victory above all shall be
To see well at a distance
To see everything
Close up
And how everything has a new name.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

Jean Cocteau

Jean Cocteau was born July 5, 1892, which means that he is now thirty-nine years of age. It still seems natural, none the less, to think of him as one has for a number of years, as an outstanding figure in the "young" literature of France. There was a time, ten years and less ago, when it seemed that he and Morand were the two more juvenile figures who, one could say, were bound to leave an imprint upon French writing of their era. Cocteau, however, while he has had and has still his devoted followers, has never been the leader of a school. Indeed, he has always rather prided himself upon having done the thing that was unpopular at the moment (it is a point, at least, that he insists upon). He began his literary career at an extremely early—one might say a "tender"—age. He himself would date his career from the publication of Le Potomak. *He regrets his "waking books," he tells us in his recently published* Opium (*1930*), *that is, those books written before* Le Potomak. *With* Le Potomak, *he "began to dream." It is* the dream *upon which Cocteau more and more insists, and this appears to be the thing he is coming back to (if he has ever strayed from it) in his* Opium. *An artist, musician, actor as well as a poet, it is as a poet that he regards himself in all his activities; see his bibliography: "Poetry"; "Poetry of the Novel"; "Critical Poetry"; "Poetry of the Theatre"; "Graphic Poetry"; etc. And in conversation, he will assure you that he is a poet, not a man of letters. His connection with the leaders of the modern movement in painting and music—with Picasso and Strawinsky, by way of example—has been a close one, and his services as propagandist are by no means to be underestimated. As we shall see later, it seemed at one time that he was to be associated with the early Dada-Surréaliste movement; but a break occurred, and since that time, Cocteau has had a literary party against him in France. His reputation now far exceeds the bounds of his country; he is an international literary figure, and there are times when it would appear that he is even more appreciated abroad than at home.*

Certain of Cocteau's works stand out as indubitable landmarks. Among them: Le Potomak, *1913-1914, with a* Prospectus 1916, *published in 1919; his* Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel, *1924; his* Orphée, *1927; his* Les Enfants terribles, *1929 (available in English); etc. It is a matter of choice; one might mention other works.*

Cocteau's career as a poet may be said to have begun with Le Coq et l'Arlequin, *1918. His collected* Poésie *is published by Stock. In this connection, one should not forget his* Opera. *His first novel,* Le Grand Écart, *was published in 1923 (available in English). A second novel,* Thomas l'Imposteur *(available in English), was published a year or so later. Other of his plays are the* Antigone, *the* Oedipe Roi, *and the* Romeo et Juliette *(1928) and* La Voix humaine *(1930), produced at the Comédie Française.*

Cocteau's critical work, beginning with the publication of Carte blanche, *1920, is also important. His* Le Rappel à l'Ordre *and his* Lettre à Jacques Maritain *(1926), particularly the latter, are in the nature of milestones for the decade.* Le Mystère Laic *appeared in 1928 and has recently been translated by Ezra Pound.*

A collection of the Cocteau drawings is published by Stock. Other works among the "Poésie Graphique" *are:* Mystère de Jean l'Oiseleur; Maison de Santé; 25 Dessins d'un Dormeur. *The author has illustrated special editions of* Le Grand Écart *and* Thomas l'Imposteur. *See, also,* Le Secret professionnel.

The recent Opium, Journal d'une désintoxication, *has been mentioned. Cocteau has of late turned to the film, and his* La vie d'un poète, film parlant et sonore, *is now ready, and the author is preparing a scenario with notes for publication in book form.*

We shall hear more of Cocteau in connection with the neo-Catholic reaction, and in connection with his recent verse.

FROM "LE POTOMAK"

(1913-1914)

I

FIRST VISIT TO THE POTOMAK

"Heavens! Argemone," I exclaimed, "you've done my room!"

"I," replied Argemone, in a satisfied tone, "have straightened up your papers and taken the Verlaines off the piano that doesn't open any more and which is of no earthly use. The best thing you could do would be to send it back to Pleyel's."

"Argemone," I sighed, "a room without a piano is like a deaf-mute; it's sickly. A room with a piano, even though a piano that isn't played, is like a person who keeps silent. You have destroyed this room's charm. If Hugo had turned over to you his unpublished work, I haven't the slightest doubt that you would have handed him the Larousse Dictionary, for, think over what I say, Argemone, a literary masterpiece is never anything more than a dictionary in disorder.

"Where are my books? Where are my Verlaines?"

ARGEMONE. Where Musset was. I've put Musset in my own bookcase. I'm wild about Musset!

WE. That's unfair of you, Argemone. I looked down on Musset when I was at the ungrateful age. But I often come back to him. His verse things lull me, and I often repeat to myself, ten times in succession:

Il se fit tout à coup le plus profond silence
Quand Georgina Smolden se leva pour chanter.

Argemone, rising therewith like Georgina Smolden, declaimed:

Lorsque le pélican, lassé d'un long voyage,
Trouve, le soir, son champ rasé par le tonnerre . . . .

and then, poutingly, with a hand over her eyes, complained that she wasn't able to remember the rest.

Ses ailes de géant l'empêchent de marcher

I concluded. Then, I called off the dogs:

"Argemone, get ready; I'm taking you to see the Potomak."

"I don't give a hang for your old Potomak," said Argemone. "In the first place, where did you get that name? It's the name of a river."

"My Potomak ends with a K (insist on the K). You'll be asking me next why it is Cambaceres has the name of a street. The river which, if I am not mistaken, empties into Chesapeake Bay owes its name to a certain Coelenterate Megapter.

"He wasn't on the Ark. The crew took him for a madrepore. He swam, he floated, Argemone. He dreams of the phenomena of the infinite of which his gelatine is the image.

"He plays little tricks on his keeper. They spoil him at the aquarium."

ARGEMONE. Where is this aquarium of yours, with all these monsters?

WE. Why, my dear Argemone, in the place de la Madeleine.

ARGEMONE. I might have known.

WE. For man, as soon as a marvel escapes from the domain of the unreal, it ceases to be a marvel. There were a dozen spectators at Farman's first flight, and if we were to read upon the sign-boards that a troupe of Centaurs were galloping in the Jardin des Plantes, we wouldn't go to see them. Or if we did, it would be a week after we had read the sign.

ARGEMONE. Do many come to your aquarium? What dress shall I wear?

WE. Keep on the one you have, Argemone. My aquarium doesn't attract any crowds. I am the only steady customer,—I and a rich American.

. . . . .

Fed on mandrakes and *montgolfières,* the Potomak was drowsing in its glass jar.

"I don't care for your old Potomak," said Argemone.

"I could have told you that," I replied.

The Potomak took a tumblerful of oil and sighed.

The rich American tossed it white gloves and mistakes in spelling.

"This aquarium on dry land doesn't mean a thing to me," Argemone kept saying.

Her persistence annoyed me.

The Potomak raised heavenward an eye drowning in prisms and its big pink ears, in the form of sea shells, drank in the infinite murmur of an inner ocean. (*Bravo.*)

WE. Ah! to put one's ear to that cool, soft flesh and surprise the ebb and flow of antediluvian waves, the silence of meteors.

ARGEMONE. How disgusting you are!

The Potomak fascinated me more and more. My restlessness found in it an answering chord. A wave came and went between us. "Little one, little one," called the keeper. The Potomak spread out its paws. It smiled. It was affectionate, no doubt of that.

"Come on," said Argemone, tugging at my coat. "It's seven o'clock."

They had just lighted some arc-lamps and mercury-tubes. The Potomak was bathed in phosphorescence. One could make out the darker outlines of its viscera and the almost black stain left by the gloves it had eaten. The keeper, Alfred, was playing on a little hydraulic flute.

We strolled off.

I had a quick glimpse, as we went, of the hexapodous Opoponax that counts its feet and makes a mistake,
the yowling Pharnyx,
the Cadence that skips along on its abdomen,
the red-carcassed Agricole run aground on fallow land,
and
the geranium-eating Orpheum.

It was hot as a bake-oven. *The boulevard de la Madeleine was refreshingly cool.*

"It's good to breathe again!" exclaimed my companion. "I'm not going down in your old cellar any more."

"I'll go alone, then," I sighed. "I know very well that it's impossible for a thing of this sort to come off the way it should."

"Well! there's a good enough reason," she snapped. "That cave is unhealthy. You run a chance of catching cold there. Your old Potomak gives me the shivers; I prefer calves' brains. It's like those Eugènes of yours; it's all imagination. I'm normal, I am. I don't know what it's all about, and I don't want to know. It's a matter of principle with me. I set my foot down." (And she stamped her foot.)

"Yes," I went on, "the Potomak worries me. What watered silks between them shape its sleepings and awakenings? What is it dreaming of? My jumbled life and the coherence of my dreams make me akin to this Potomak. The same fluid substance runs through us both. I am between the devil and the deep sea, as they say. I go on living in my dreams and dreaming with my daytime mechanism. I may sometimes appear distracted because I do not notice signs that are made to me or follow up encounters; but that is for the reason that I believe myself to be the only one who is aware of them, as happens in dreams.

I go to bed as one picks up a book. I lie, sometimes, for ten minutes or an hour, with all my clothes on under the covers. In this way, I prolong and retard my course, for the life of dreams opens wide the box of human dimensions.

You've often seen me, Argemone, coming out of my room, my face in a fuddle. Wasn't it Pascal who inquired if dreams did not add to the sum of experience? I've come to believe him. Dreams direct me and I direct my dreams. Many of the things I've seen the evening before I unmethodically register, as one might gather up fragments of multi-colored glass, in order that sleep may co-ordinate and revolve them at the bottom of a dark kaleidoscope. People think me frivolous, unstable, versatile, egoistic: I'm dreaming. And not, understand me, Argemone, any of those Murger dreams, in which the sleeper marries a Chinese princess. *I proceed.*

Landscape
tunnel
landscape
tunnel
blue-eyed tunnel.

My reality is so very like my dreams that, believing I am in one room, I sometimes find myself in another. Certain of my afflicting dreams are so very like the reality I know that, alas, the hope that they may be but dreams means nothing to me.

I have read stories about dreams, in which dead persons or close associates play absurd parts, fostered by memory. The stomach on the inside and a disturbance on the outside evolve the labyrinth. But these are the vermine on an imitation corpse. They fail to take me out of my lucid lethargy. In my opinion, they are quite as incapable of being compared to my own dreams as the phenomenon of Daltonism is inadequate to the interpretation of a painter.

Argemone, when I came out of my dreams, you always used to give me a cool reception. I brought no news of the Stock Exchange, and I did not know the names of the cabinet-ministers. I'm wrong. I know it. But even if you are convinced that you are but the wheels and pulleys of a commonplace blunder, that doesn't mean that you don't have to keep on playing your part. The Potomak's part is to be the Potomak, mine to travel, to learn, to go up in an aeroplane, to invent a new dynamite. Yet you are angry because I ask you questions about the mysteries of your childhood and give you information about my own.

Argemone, did you walk the crack of a sidewalk four times?

Did you, Argemone, walk around to the right of certain lamp-posts and to the left of certain trees?

Did you come back a dozen times, Argemone, to touch a certain doorknob, until your palm had had enough of it?

Did you, by way of relieving the ache in your shoulders, restore certain imaginary balances by making faces that you were ashamed of, and which you were afraid your nurse would find you making?

Argemone, I used to see colored days, and I have not seen them since I was twelve years old. Up to the age of seven, Argemone, I believed that I had lived in China.

You used to reproach me with my nerves and my literary leanings. Your good faith was flagrant, but I paid you the supreme compliment of believing in your bad faith.

My dear Argemone, the best of lovers quarrel.

One evening, at Padua (it was on a bench down by the water-front) I saw a pair of lovers exchanging caresses. It was a mild night, and I could hear their faintest sighs.

Shall I ever forget their laugh

as their knees and elbows awkwardly bumped?

We were especially water-tight.

Argemone, you are afraid of death. An appendicitis you once had has converted you. You go to mass, and you stop dreaming the moment you have entered the portal. A mite in the cripple's cap is astonished at your muff. You often speak to me pityingly of this cripple, and you say to me:

"How can one complain when one has legs?"

"Every Jack to his Jill, Argemone. As for myself, there are hours at a time when I feel that death is the only certitude that brings with it no peace; while at other times, I feel that it is a recompense, the queen of surprises here below; at other times . . . . But you shall hear more of death later. Argemone, I might be able to find an (egoistic) consolation at the sight of your cripple, if it were not that his longing for legs gives me, who have them, a longing for wings."

"I'm sleepy," said Argemon. "And I don't want to dream about your old Potomak. I dream a lot just now. Indigestion, no doubt. Do you dream, old dear?"

"No," I replied, "for my digestion is excellent, and I am feeling marvelously fit."

That night, we went no further.

II

FROM "ARIANE"

I seek as balance to this volume a successive momentary balance of phrase and word.

The acrobat, in short, and underneath the void.

If all goes well * * * foot after foot and the rope beneath, toward the opposite wall * * * one gets there.

There is always a tight-rope over the void.

The clever thing is to walk over death as over eggs.

A written word: a slip that is all but a fall
a little lather
a little crowd
a little murmur.

One is not any lighter for being in the air.

As a fruit wafts its refreshing bloom about the pericarp, so Cybele sends the fugitive a come-home order.

I would walk a free being between the open arms of the world, above
the dumb sirens of dizziness.

III

THIRD VISIT TO THE POTOMAK

This Sunday evening, the aquarium was in an uproar. The mercury cast a tragic light on Alfred.

It was close and sticky.

I recalled walks I had taken in the Jardin d'Acclimatation with my nurse. The hot-house was an old crocodile asleep.

As soon as I put in an appearance, there were shouts.

"Come quick, come quick," cried Alfred, "there's something new."

"Nothing gone wrong?"

"No, no, but our American is quite hopeless. His last effrontery is the limit. He makes things a bit ticklish for me and, now, when I offer the Potomak an aloes stalk, it refuses to take it, paws to right and left, spits out its olive-oil and pouts at me. That's a fine way to treat us."

The Potomak, the truth is, was smiling.

"Think of it," grumbled Alfred, "an American gramophone; a thirty-thousand-franc machine; is the man crazy!"

And indeed, like the very entrails of Bayreuth, there now went up, through flesh and scales, deadened but sonorous against the glass walls, the streaming gravity, the turbid pomp, the undine emphasis of Amfortas' bath.

The Potomak was not at all put out by this effervescence of notes, which came thronging like globules to the surface of the Rhine. It relished these intestinal rumblings of cathedral and aquarium.

"Has it been playing long?"

"For two days," replied Alfred. "He doesn't digest it very well. PARSIFAL is starting now. I've just listened to SIEGFRIED."

"And how did he react to Fafnir?"

"He smiled."

"I fancy," I suggested, "that a régime like that is not the best thing in the world for him."

The Opoponax was counting its feet, the Cadence was skipping. The Agricole was raking the earth, the Orpheum was eating a geranium, the Pharnyx was reciting "Odile," and the light had a nervous affection.

One could feel luxuriousness slaying love.

IV

FROM "TIRAGE SPÉCIAL"

Potomak! My Potomak! I shall find you soon again.

Behold, we are separated one from another as light waters from the heavy.

Forgive me for having called you Potomak.

Go, birds, said God on the fourth day and, in Hebrew, he added: Frrrrrr!

I instinctively discovered a name that fits you after a fashion.

Out of you, little by little, I have extracted a world.

I am going to have to travel, work, sleep.

Potomak, I have my regrets for the aquarium in the place de la Madeleine, but I shall see you later.

V

FROM "COMMENT ILS VINRENT"

I should like to quote you two sayings. They are words that were said to me by H. Poincaré a few days before his death. I was very young, and I had met him at Alysse's. Here is the first one.

"Why are you timid? It is I who should be timid. Your youth and poetry are both privileged characters. A chance rhyme sometimes brings a system to light, and gayety catches mystery on the fly."

The second was better yet:

"Yes, yes," said this upright man. "I get what you mean. You want to know where we stand in relation to the unknown. Every day brings a new marvel in our laboratories, but we are obliged to keep a professional silence. I see things, I see things . . . ." (And he removed his eyeglasses.) "Our faith can only be fed on certitude. The unknown! . . . .

I hear the samovar and a steamer on the Seine.

"We, at the present time, are like miners digging out a tunnel, who hear the heavy thud, the first pick-ax-blows of miners on the other side."

You admit, Axonge, it wasn't bad? But now, he's dead. THEY killed him: the police of the unknown.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

1916: THE BIRTH OF DADA

It was in the year 1916, the year before America entered the struggle, that War-darkness would seem to have attained its most intense pitch. In Italy, France and Germany (Hasenclever's *Der Sohn* has been spoken of), more than one outstanding literary work was produced reflective of the period, and everywhere, there appeared to be a spirit of frustrate revolt that frequently found outlet in an all-embracing pessimism and a despairing nihilism. It was, significantly, in this year that a number of young men of different nationalities banded together to start a little magazine at Zurich, Switzerland. Their address was "Movement Dada, Zeltweg 33, Zurich. The leader of the group and the director of the *Bulletin* was a Roumanian, Tristan Tzara; and for two years, his productions, together with numerous manifestoes, were to constitute the bulk of the new

Dada "literature." It was in 1916 that Tzara began his career as an author by publishing his *Première Aventure céleste de M. Antipyrine.*

Meanwhile, things were happening elsewhere, including an event that was to influence the course of literary history, at least for some fourteen years to follow. This was the meeting of André Breton, to become one of the leaders of Dada and, later, the founder of Surrealism, and one Jacques Vaché. This encounter and its consequences have been excellently recorded by M. Émile Bouvier:

JACQUES VACHÉ [1]

(From *Initiation à la Littérature d'aujourd'hui*)

BY ÉMILE BOUVIER

This meeting of Vaché and André Breton, a decisive episode in the gestation of Dada, took place at Nantes, at the beginning of 1916. André Breton, mobilized as an interne at the neurological center, met at the hospital a very curious wounded soldier. The latter was a very large and elegant-appearing young man with red hair, a former École des Beaux Arts pupil, who was, moreover, an utter idler, but a systematic one. His sole concern appeared to be to introduce into real life a little of that humorous fantasy which ordinarily is only to be found in Mark Twain's stories or in insane asylums. But he was not at all crazy, and could explain his conduct when occasion required. His actions, none the less, were as disconcerting as Jarry's worst eccentricities.[2] For example, he was barely out of hospital when he hired himself out as a stevedore, and he thereafter passed his afternoons in unloading coal on the quays along the Loire. In the evening, on the other hand, he would make the rounds of the cafés and cinemas, dressed in the height of fashion and with many variations of costume. What was more, in time of war, he would strut forth sometimes in the uniform of a lieutenant of Hussars, sometimes in that of an English officer, of an aviator or of a surgeon. In civil life, he was quite as free and easy, thinking nothing of introducing Breton under the name of André Salmon, while he took unto himself, but quite without vanity, the most won-

[1] Title supplied.

[2] For a lively description of Jarry, see André Breton's *Les Pas Perdus,* p. 57.

derful titles and adventures. He never said good morning nor good evening nor good-by, and never took any notice of letters, except those from his mother, when he had to ask for money. He did not recognize his best friends from one day to another. He lived with a young woman whom he obliged to remain motionless and silent in a corner while he was entertaining a friend, and whose hand he merely kissed with an ineffable dignity, when she had served the tea. This phenomenal being was very well informed on everything pertaining to contemporary literature; but he was long past the stage of art for art's sake, and preferred to such pretentious and frivolous pastimes the satisfaction that he found in shaping his own existence to suit his fancy.

Little by little, he imparted his secret to his new friends. This secret was nothing more than a definition of humor, carried to its furthest consequences, to the point of abolishing even the feeling that life was worth while. Jacques Vaché's philosophy rested upon three principles: First: *"Humor is a sense of the theatric and joyless futility of everything, when one is enlightened,"* a "sense" that permits one to show an equal disdain for all the gestures of humanity, including those of the poets. Second: *"It is of the essence of symbols to be symbolic,"* or in other words, the symbolic signification of actions, objects or landscapes is but an arbitrary invention on the part of the artist, but one that corresponds to the existence of a hidden reality, more real than the reality of every day (an idea already latent in Mallarmé, and which is, as it were, the germ of the whole Surréaliste theory). Finally, Vaché held that there entered into humor a good deal of a *"formidable ubique,"* that is to say, of an element of stupid surprise that is comical and, at the same time, disconcerting by reason of its destructive potentialities, an element which Jarry had illustrated in *Ubu roi.*

The essential thing was to put into practice this singular philosophy; as we have seen, Vaché himself succeeded at it very well. But the latter's triumph was his death at Nantes, some time before the Armistice. He not only committed suicide, which is an old story in the history of French letters, but he committed suicide in a formidable and humorous fashion, by taking, *and forcing two of his comrades to take,* a large over-dose of opium, although he knew very well what the proper method of employing the drug was. From this date on (1918), a little of Arthur Rimbaud's glory shone about his name, for those artistic and active nihilists whose soul-state we have been endeavoring to define. His letters, the anecdotes that were

current about him, his grotesque and desolating apothegms conferred upon Dada a rather sombre philosophic tinge. Tzara's literary mystifications, which had succeeded in building up a school and a body of blustering publicity around nothing at all, now found their place in a mystification of a good deal broader scope, the object of which was to juggle away, to parody and to ridicule, all "accepted ideas," all forms of social activity. Dada became a war-like weapon, the point of which was humor, or, if you like, an instrument for the demolition of the Old World by means of dynamite disguised as a simpleton's jest.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Jacques Vaché's attitude was one inherently antipathetic to "literature." This antipathy is expressed in one of his letters, which is an important document, not only for this reason, but because of its intimation of what were to be two of the fundamental principles of young after-the-War writing. The letter follows:

A LETTER [3]

By Jacques Vaché

Well, then, we do not care either for art or for artists (down with Apollinaire) and how very right Tograth was in assassinating the poet. However, since it seems to be necessary to spit up a little acid or stale lyricism now and then, let's be snappy about it, for locomotives make time.[4]

Persevering modernity likewise, and killed every night. No hatred for Mallarmé, for he is dead. We don't recognize Apollinaire any longer, for we suspect him of being a bit too canny in the matter of art, of patching up romanticism with a telephone wire and of not knowing his dynamos. The stars are unhooked,—it's very tiresome. And then sometimes they are not quite serious in what they say. A man who is a believer is a curious specimen. But then some are born hams. . . .[5]

Ah, well, I can see two ways of putting up with all that. To shape the personal sensation through the aid of a blazing collusion of rare

[3] Title Supplied.

[4] *que ce soit fait saccadé vivement, car les locomotives vont vite.*

[5] *quelques-uns sont nés cabotins.*

words,—not often, eh, what?—or else to trade angles or cleancut squares of feeling. Those of the moment, naturally. We will leave to one side a logic probity—whose business it is to contradict us—like everybody else.

O absurd God, for all is contradiction, is it not?—and the *"umore"* [6] will be the one who does not permit himself to be craftily snared by the life of everyday. O my alarm-clock—eyes and hypocrite —who hate me so . . . and the *"umore"* shall be the one who is conscious of the distressing *trompe-l'oeil* of universal simili-symbols. It is of their nature to be symbolic.

It is not the business of the *"umore"* to produce, but what is he to do about it? I credit Lafcadio with a little humor, for he doesn't read, and produces nothing but amusing experiences, such as Homicide, and all this without any satanic lyricism, Baudelaire old dear, you who have long since rotted.

Assuredly, I am at some distance from a lot of literary folks—even from Rimbaud, I think, old man. —Art is a stupidity.— Practically nothing is a stupidity. Art ought to be something funny and a trifle boring. That is all there is to it. Max Jacob, on rare occasions, might be *umoreu,* but what does he do but end up by taking himself seriously,—which is a very serious form of intoxication. And as for producing?—*to aim so conscientiously at missing one's mark*—naturally, irony when put down in writing is insufferable,—but naturally you are well aware that humor is not irony.[7]

(*Translated by* S. P.)

DADA AND THE REVOLT AGAINST "LITERATURE"

(1919–1920)

Tzara's first book, *La première aventure céleste de Monsieur Antipyrine* (1916) was followed, in 1918, by a collection, *25 Poèmes,* likewise published from Zurich. Dada, however, failed to attract much attention until after the Armistice, when the movement was brought to Paris. It was at this time that such men as Francis Picabia,

[6] Vaché's own word, like *umoreau* below; compare the Italian.

[7] This letter was reproduced in *Littérature,* No. 6. See Breton's edition of Vaché's *Lettres de Guerre* (1919).

the painter, and Paul Éluard, the poet, joined forces with Tzara, and at the end of the year 1918, we find the *Bulletin Dada* installed at 32, rue Charles Floquet. This publication, under various titles, continued to appear until 1920, being finally called *Cannibale*. Meanwhile, the fusion between the Zurich and French groups was going on, and adherents like André Breton were being gained.

On the first of March, 1919, the publication of a review with the satiric title (taken from Valéry) of *"Littérature"* was begun. The group about this review included the former "literary Cubists," Apollinaire, Salmon and Jacob, such older men as Gide and Valéry, and a number of *jeunes,* including Philippe Soupault, André Breton and Louis Aragon, the directors of the magazine, and Paul Morand, Drieu La Rochelle, Blaise Cendrars and others. There were also affiliations with the musical Group of Six, Satie and others, and with the painters, Derain, Picasso, and their associates.

In December, 1919, *Littérature* launched an *enquête* on the subject, "Why do you write?" The responses were varied. Max Jacob gave as his reason: "In order that I may be able to write better all the time." Some confessed that they wrote from despair, others said they wrote out of weakness; some spoke of a sense of duty; others said they wrote to eat. The conclusion of the whole matter, so far as Dada was concerned, was to the effect that Knut Hamsun's answer, "I write to kill time," was the only intelligent one.

This question of the writer's purpose, of his relation to writing, will be found coming up again, in clearer outlines.

In 1920, Dada organized a series of manifesto-readings, the first of which was held on February 5, in the Salon des Indépendants. Samples of the manifestoes are given in the section immediately following. Those of Tzara's are from his *Sept Manifestes Dada,* published two years later (in 1924).

The *Manifesto by Monsieur Antipyrine* was read at the first Dada manifestation at Zurich (Saal Waag), on the fourteenth of July, 1916. It was published in *La première aventure céleste de Monsieur Antipyrine.* The *Dada Manifesto 1918* was read at Zurich (Saal Meise) on the 23rd of March, 1918. It appeared in *Dada 3.* The *Tristan Tzara* was read at the Université populaire, on the 18th of February, 1920. It appeared in *Littérature,* No. 13. The *Manifesto on Weak Love and Bitter Love* was read at the Galerie Povolozky, Paris, on the 12th of December, 1920. It was published in *La Vie des Lettres,* No. 4. The other three manifestoes bore the titles: *Proclamation sans pretention* (read at the eighth Dada evening at

Zurich, Saal Kaufleuten, on the eighth of April, 1919; published in the *Anthologie Dada*); *Manifeste de Mr. Aa l'Antiphilosophe* (read at the Grand Palais des Champs-Elysées, on the fifth of February, 1920; published in *Littérature,* No. 13); and *Monsieur Aa envoie ce Manifeste* (read at the Festival Dada, at the Salle Gaveau, Paris, on the 22nd of May, 1920; published in *"391,"* No. 12. There was an eighth one entitled *Comment je suis devenu charmant sympathique et delicieux;* this was read at the Galerie Povolozky, Paris, on the 19th of December, 1920, and appeared in *La Vie des Lettres,* No. 4.

DADA MANIFESTOES

(*Dada Prose*)

MANIFESTOES

By Tristan Tzara

manifesto by monsieur antipyrine

DADA is our intensity, which erects inconsequential bayonets the sumatral head of the German baby; DADA is life without slippers or parallel; which is against and for unity and decidedly against the future; we know wisely that our brains will become downy cushions that our anti-dogmatism is as exclusivist as the functionary and that we are not free and go crying liberty . . . Severe necessity without discipline or morality and we spit on humanity. DADA remains within the frame of European weaknesses it is all the same *de la merde* but we wish from now on to *dejecate* in various colors by way of adorning the zoological garden of art and all the flags of the consulates

We are circus masters and go whistling among the winds of fairs among the convents prostitutions theatres realities sentiments restaurants

HoHiHoHo Bang Bang

We declare that the auto is a feeling that has coddled us sufficiently in the sluggishness of its abstractions and the transatlantics and the noises and the ideas. However we exteriorize the facility we seek the central essence and we are happy being able to conceal it; we do not care to count the windows of the marvelous élite for DADA

does not exist for anyone and we would like for everybody to understand that for it is the balcony of Dada I assure you. From where one can hear the military marches to come down cutting the air like a seraph in a popular bath *pour pisser* and understand the parabola DADA is not madness—nor wisdom—nor irony look at me pretty bourgeois

Art was a *jeu noisette* the children assembled the words which have a set of chimes on the end when they wept and wailed the strophe, and they put on it the dolls' boots and the strophe became queen to die a little and the queen became whalebone (*baleine*) the children ran until they were out of breath (*à perdre haleine*) Then came the great Ambassadors of feeling who cried historically in chorus

psychology psychology hihi
Science Science Science
vive la France
we are not naïve
we are successive
we are exclusive
we are not simple
and we are quite well able to discuss intelligence

But we DADA we are not of their persuasion for art is not serious I assure you and if we are to show the crime to utter learnedly ventilator, it is for your pleasure kind auditors I love you so much I assure you and I adore you

dada manifesto 1918

(Selections)

. . . . .

The love of novelty is the congenial cross, gives proof of a naïve *jem'enfoutisme,* sign without cause, transitory, positive. But this need is likewise demoded. In documenting art with supreme simplicity: novelty, one is human and true for amusement, impulsive, vibrant to crucify boredom. At the crossway of the lights, alert, attentive in ambushing the years, in the forest. . . . I am writing a manifesto and I want nothing, yet I say certain things, and I am against manifestoes as a matter of principle, as I am also against principles (decilitres for the moral value of every phrase—too convenient; approximation was invented by the impressionists). . . .

I write this manifesto to show that one may perform opposed actions together, in a single fresh respiration; I am against action; for continual contradiction, for affirmation also, I am neither for nor against and I do not explain for I hate good sense.

DADA—there is a word that leads ideas to the chase; every bourgeois is a little dramatist, invents different remarks, instead of providing characters suitable to the quality of his intelligence, chrysalises on the chairs, seeks the causes or the ends (according to the psychanalytic method that he practices) to cement his plot, talking story that is defined. . . . Each spectator is a plotter, if he seeks to explain a word: (*connaître!*) Out of a refuge wadded with serpentine complications he has his instincts manipulated. Hence the woes of the conjugal life.

To explain: Sport of the redbellies in the mills of empty craniums.

DADA MEANS NOTHING

If one finds it futile and if one has no time to waste over a word that means nothing. . . . The first thought that whirls around in those heads is of bacteriologic order: to find its origin etymological, historical or psychological, at least. One learns from the newspapers that the Krou negroes call a cow's tail holy: DADA. The cube is the mother in a certain part of Italy: DADA. Hobby-horse, nurse, twofold affirmation in Russian and in Roumanian: DADA. Erudite journalists see in it an art for infants, others holy Jesuscallingthelittleones of the day, the return to an arid and noisy primitivism, noisy and monotonous. One does not build the sensitivity upon a word; every construction converges to a tiresome perfection, stagnant idea of a gilded bog, relative human product. The work of art should not be beauty in itself, for it is dead; neither gay nor sad, nor light nor dark, to rejoice or mistreat individualities in serving them the cakes of holy aureoles or the sweats of a race curved through the atmospheres. A work of art is never beautiful, by decree, objectively, for all. Criticism is therefore useless, it exists only subjectively, for each one, and without the slightest character of generality. Is it believed that the psychic base common to all humanity has been found? The effort of Jesus and the bible covering under their wide and benevolent wings: *la merde,* the animals, the days. How bring order into the chaos which constitutes that infinite formless variation: man? The principle: "love thy neighbor" is an hypocrisy. "Know thyself" is a utopia but more

acceptable for it contains malice in itself. No pity. There remains for us after the carnage the hope of a purified humanity. I speak always for myself since I have no desire to convince, I have not the right to draw others into my stream, I do not oblige anyone to follow me and everyone shapes his own art in his own fashion, if he knows the joy mounting in darts toward the astral strata, or that which descends in the mines to the flowers of cadavers and of fertile spasms. Stalactites: to seek them everywhere, in the cradles hollowed out by grief, eyes white as the hares of the angels.

Thus was born DADA out of a need of independence, of defiance for the community. Those who belong to us keep their freedom. We do not recognize any theory. We have had enough of cubistic and futuristic academies: laboratories of formal ideas. Does one produce art to earn money and fondle the nice little bourgeois? Rhymes sound the assonance of moneys and the inflection glides along the line of the belly in profile. All the groupings of artists have ended up at this bank straddling various comets. The gate is open to the possibilities of wallowing in the well-fed cushions.

. . . . . .

A picture is the art of causing two lines to meet geometrically established as parallels, upon a canvas, in front of our eyes, in a reality that transposes to a world of other conditions and possibilities. This world is not specified or defined in the art-work, it belongs in its countless variations to the spectator. For its creator it is without cause and without theory. *Order-disorder; me-not-me; affirmation-negation;* supreme radiations of an absolute art. Absolute in purity of cosmic and ordered chaos, eternal in the globule second without duration without respiration without light without control. . . . I love an old work for its novelty. It is only contrast that binds us to the past. . . . Writers who teach morality and who discuss or improve the psychologic basis possess, apart from a hidden desire for profit, a ridiculous knowledge of life, which they have classified, parceled out, canalized; they insist upon seeing the categories dance as they beat time. Their readers sneer and go on: what's the use?

There is a literature which does not reach the voracious mass. The work of creators, sprung from a real necessity on the part of the author, and for himself. Consciousness of a supreme egotism where the stars waste away. . . . Each page must explode, either with the profoundly serious and heavy, the whirlwind, dizziness, the

new, the eternal, with the overwhelming hoax, with an enthusiasm for principles or with the mode of typography. On the one hand a staggering fleeing world, affianced to the jingle-bells of the infernal gamut, on the other hand: new beings. Rude, bounding, riders of hiccups. A mutilated world and the medicasters travailing to improve it.

I say to you: there is no beginning and we do not tremble, we are not sentimental. We rend, furious wind, the linen of clouds and of prayers, and prepare the great spectacle of disaster, the conflagration, decomposition. Prepare the suppression of sorrow and replace tears with sirens stretched from one continent to the other. Pavilions of joy intense and widowed of the sadness of poison. . . . DADA is the banner of abstraction; advertising and business are likewise poetic elements. I do away with the drawers of the brain and those of the body social: to bring demoralization everywhere and to cast the hand of heaven on hell, the eyes of hell on heaven, to re-establish the prolific wheel of a universal circus in the real potentialities and the fantasy of each individual.

Philosophy is the question: from what point of view to begin looking at life, god, the idea, or other apparitions. Everything that one looks at is false.

. . . . .

If I cry:

Ideal, ideal, ideal,
Knowledge, knowledge, knowledge
Boomboom, boomboom, boomboom,

I have given an exact registering of progress, law, morality and all the other fine qualities which different and highly intelligent individuals have discussed in so many books, only to state in the end that each one has danced according to his personal boomboom. . . .

. . . . .

Thought is a fine thing for philosophy but it is relative. Psychanalysis is a dangerous malady, puts the anti-real penchants of man to sleep and systematizes the bourgeoisie. There is no last Truth. Dialectic is an amusing machine which carries us—in a stupid manner— to opinions which we would have had in any case. Does any one believe that, through the minute refinements of logic, he has succeeded in demonstrating truth and in establishing the exactness of his opinions? Logic compressed by the senses is an organic disease. The philosophers are fond of adding: The power of observa-

tion. But this magnificent faculty of the mind is the very proof of its impotence. One observes, one looks from one or many points of view, one chooses them from among the millions that exist. Experience is similarly a result of chance and of the individual faculties. . . . Science is repugnant to me when it becomes a speculative-system, loses its useful character—so useless—but at least individual. I hate an obese objectivity and harmony, that science which finds everything in order. Keep on, my lads, humanity. . . .[1]

DADAIST SPONTANEITY

. . . . .

But seeing that life is a sorry farce, without end or initial accouchement, and because we feel that we should get out of it the best way we can, washing our hands of the affair, we have proclaimed one basis of understanding: art. It has not the sing-song importance which we, mental old-fogies, have bestowed upon it for centuries. Art is not an affliction to anyone and those who know how to find an interest in it receive caresses and an opportunity to populate the country with their conversation. Art is a private affair, the artist produces it for himself; a comprehensible work is a journalistic product. . . .[2]

. . . . .

Logic is a complication. Logic is always false. It draws out the thread of notions, words, in their formal exterior towards the ends of illusory centers. Its chains slay, myriapod awful asphyxiant independence. Married to logic, art would live in incest, engulfing, swallowing its own tail always its body, fornicating with itself, and temperament would become a nightmare tarred with Protestantism, a monument, a lot of lumpish grizzly intestines.

. . . . .

Let each man cry: there is a great destructive, negative work to be accomplished. To sweep clean, to clean out. The cleanliness of the individual affirms itself after the state of madness, of complete, aggressive madness of a world left in the hands of bandits, who rend themselves and destroy the ages. Without aim or object, without organization: insuperable madness, decomposition.

[1] The author's asterisks.
[2] Editor's asterisks.

DADAIST DISGUST

Every product of disgust susceptible of becoming a negation of the family is *dada*; fistic protest with one's whole being in destructive action: DADA; familiarity with all the means rejected up to the present by the modest sex of convenient compromise and politeness: **Dada**; abolition of logic, dance of creation's impotents: **Dada**; of all hierarchie and social equations inaugurated for the sake of values by our valets: **Dada**; each object, all the objects, the feelings and the obscurities, the apparitions and the precise shock of parallel lines, are means for the combat: **Dada**; abolition of the memory: **Dada**; abolition of archaeology: **Dada**; abolition of prophecies: **Dada**; abolition of the future: **Dada**; absolute undebatable belief in every god immediate product of the spontaneity: **Dada**; elegant and unprejudiced leap, from one harmony to the other sphere; trajectory of a word hurled like a discus sonorous shout; to respect all the individualities in their madness of the moment: serious, fearful, timid, ardent, vigorous, decided, enthusiastic; to peel one's church of every cumbersome and useless accessory; to spit out like a luminous cascade the disobliging or amorous thought, or to coddle it—with the lively satisfaction that it's all one—with the same intensity in the bush, pure of insects for the blood well born, and gilded with the bodies of archangels, with its soul. Freedom **Dada Dada Dada,** howling of shriveled colors, interlacing of contraries and of all the contradictions, grotesques, inconsequentials: **Life.**

tristan tzara

(Selections)

Take a good look at me!
I am absurd, I play the fool, I am a mystifier.
Take a good look at me.
I am ugly, my face is expressionless, I am small.
I am like you all! [3]
But ask yourself, before you look at me, if the iris through which you send me those watery sentimental darts is not fly's dung, if your belly's eyes are not sections of tumors whose glances sometime will emerge from some part or other of your body under the form of a gonorrheal flux.

[3] A little press-agenting. (M. Tzara's Note.)

You see with your navel—why do you deprive yourself of the ridiculous spectacle which we offer you? And lower down, women's organs, with teeth, which swallow everything—the poetry of eternity, love, pure love, naturally,—rare-steaks and oil-paintings. All those who look and who comprehend readily take a stand between poetry and love, between the steak and the painting. They shall be digested, they shall be digested.

. . . . .

For I, chameleon change infiltration to convenient attitudes—multicolored opinions for every occasion dimension and price—I do the contrary of what I propose for others.[4]

dada

manifesto on weak

love and bitter love

(Selections)

Anti-dadaism is a disease: selfcleptomania, the normal state of man is DADA.
But the real dadas are against DADA.

How to compose a dadaist poem

Take a newspaper.
Take shears.
Select in the newspaper an article of the length which it is your intention that your poem should be.
Clip the article.
Then cut out carefully each of the words which compose this article and put them in a bag.
Shake gently.
Then lay each clipping down in the order in which it comes out of the bag.
Copy conscientiously.
The poem will be like you.
And there you are a highly original and charmingly sensitive writer, not yet appreciated by the mob.[5]

. . . . .

[4] Sometimes. (M. Tzara's Note.)

[5] Example: When the dogs cross the air in a diamond like ideas and the appendix of. (M. Tzara's Note.)

and here's where you all blow up.

and you are going to blow up I swear.
The great mystery is a secret, but it is known by certain persons. They will never tell you what dada is. To amuse you once more I will tell you something like:
dada is the dictatorship of the mind, or
dada is the dictatorship of language,
or else
dada is the death of the mind.
which will please many of my friends.
friends.

. . . . .

DADA is a virgin microbe
Dada is against the high cost of living
Dada
corporation for the exploitation of
ideas
Dada has 391 different hues and poses according to the sex of the chairman
It is transformed—affirmed—states the contrary at the same time—unimportant—shouts—goes fishing
Dada is the chameleon of rapid and interested change
Dada is against the future. Dada is dead.
Dada is absurd. Long live Dada. Dada is not a literary school howl

. . . . .

DADA is not a doctrine to put in practice: Dada—it is to lie: something that *goes* (*qui marche bien*).—Dada runs into debt and does not live on its wench. The good God created a universal language, that is why no one takes it seriously. A language is a utopia. God can afford not to be successful: Dada also.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

A MANIFESTO

By Francis Picabia

Manifesto of the Dada Movement: You haven't the faintest idea, I take it, what we are up to! Ah, well, old dear, we know less about it than you do. So, congratulations, you're right after all! I'd love to sleep with the pope once more! That's greek to you? Sad, but the same here!

Signed: FRANCIS PICABIA
(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

DADA AND THE REVOLT AGAINST "LITERATURE"
(*Continued*)

The second noisy session was held in the rue La Boétie, on March 2, 1920, with the programmed declaration: "Anti-literature Dada. Anti-music Dada. Anti-painting Dada." The cry at this meeting was "You are all imbeciles! You are all chairmen of the Dada movement!" Other demonstrations followed, including a lecture in Dada patois by Tzara, to the deafening music of a jazz band.

As to the meaning, the purpose of Dada, its followers would reply: "Dada means nothing whatsoever. Dada is after nothing whatsoever. The absence of a system is a system in itself, but the most charming one there is."

"It is impossible," asserts Breton,[6] *"to determine where or at what date Dada was born. The name which one of us chose to give it has the advantage of being perfectly meaningless.*

"Cubism was a school of painting, Futurism a political movement; Dada is a state of mind. To compare one with another indicates either ignorance or bad faith. . . . Dada is artistic free-thought. . . . we try to break up the meeting. Dada is committed to nothing, neither to love nor to labor. That man should leave behind him a trace of his stay upon earth is something we cannot admit. Dada admits nothing but instinct and condemns all a priori *explanation. According to Dada, it is not our business to exert ourselves. There is no longer any question of such dogmas as morality and good taste."*

It may be noted that there was at first a disposition on the part

[6] *Les Pas Perdus*, p. 73.

of the Dadaists to accept Jean Cocteau, but for some reason, an early break occurred. Nevertheless, much of Cocteau's work of this period, *Le Coq et l'Arlequin, Carte-Blanche,* etc., shows that he was, at this time, working along the same lines.

THE DADA POETS

As for the Dada poets,—and it is in poety that Dada shows, on the literary side,—Tristan Tzara and Picabia are probably the best representatives, while the Paul Morand of *Lampes à arc* (1919) and *Feuilles de température* (1920), who might, for convenience, be classed as a verse Dadaist, may more accurately be taken as reflecting the influence of the movement.

Tristan Tzara

Commenting on Tzara, the poet, the anonymous Author of the prefatory note to his poems in the "Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie Française" (*1928*) *has this to say:*

"He (Tzara) is a pure poet, and his poems, disheveled in form, are possessed of a refreshingly limpid quality. . . . (He) summons words from the four corners of the horizon, with nothing to bind them together, neither custom nor modes of thought, nor that odious variety of paradox which . . . corrupts all jests and condemns them forever to the inferno of the pun. Like a set of pearls strung together with no false connecting link, each word, each turn of thought is a thing in itself, and forms for the moment a world, up to the instant when he joins them all by the adventitious but unerring thread of inspiration.

"The gleam of the fragments gilds the pill for us. . . . Tristan Tzara's song, by its unfamiliar junctions, its mingling of distinct revolts and quite different emotions, outstrides the soul and invites the latter, sweeps it along, plunges into it and, with unaccustomed caresses, touches it at points where it has not been touched before, shakes it and stirs it with new griefs and happy hazards.

"He not so much awakens the unconscious as causes it to spring into being, arousing strange torpors and pointing to new roads of which none would have dreamed, roads which, with straightabout detours, lead to points so far removed from one another.

"So does Tristan Tzara, with a kaleidoscopic apparatus and a pair of scissors for clipping words from the newspaper and for clipping

out sensations in our hearts, go on putting together his quite mad songs which are, yet, pure poetry, the swift and sparkling violence of which permeates and charms us. . . . Is not, in reality, the essential principle of the doctrine an appeal to the pure unconscious? The dogmatic extreme of pure abstract creation is thus brought home to the romantic extreme of pure inspiration."

While the foregoing may be a bit flowery, it will at least serve to give an idea of the light in which the founder of Dada is viewed by his admirers. That "appeal to the pure unconscious" is important, as paving the way for Surréalisme.

Tzara, in any event, holds his place, if only, to quote Breton, for his "admirable spirit of revolt."

Tzara's bibliography is as follows: La première aventure céleste de Monsieur Antipyrine, *1916;* Vingt-cinq poèmes, *1918 (with ten woodcuts by Arp),* Cinéma calendrier du coeur abstrait maisons, *1920 (with nineteen woodcuts by Arp);* Sept Manifestes Dada, *1924 (with drawings by Picabia);* Mouchoir de Nuages, *1925;* Indicateur de chemins de coeur, *1928;* Des nos Oiseaux, *1929 (drawings by Arp);* L'Homme approximatif, *1930;* L'Arbre des voyageurs, *1931.*

Examples of M. Tzara's more recent work in poetry will be given later in this section. The poem given below is from the Cinéma calendrier du coeur abstrait maisons.

MAISON FLAKE

unlatch bugles the announcement vast and hyaline animals of the
maritime service
aerostatic ranger all that is strides galloping clarity life
the angel with white hips umbrella virility
snow licks the road and the lily verifies virgin
$\frac{3}{25}$ altitude a new meridian passes here
stretched bow of my heart typewriter for the stars
who told you "chopped foam of prodigious clock-blues"
offers you a word not found in Larousse
that wants its full growth

what steam from a lightning-tube pushes
ours against the eternal and multiform veil
here one does not murder men on terraces
that take the hue of an intimate succession of sluggishnesses

we try unheard of things
mirages quarto micrographies of chromatic souls and images
we carry around all jingle-bell tumults that we stir up
for the major holidays on the viaducts and for the animals
whirl of an octavo dance on meteor and violin
the play of glasses year that passes
drink a bumper I'm the crazy brother
skyey ink hydromel lake
of the opaque wine flake in hammock
practices the calm and fecund offertory
it scrapes the sky with its nails
and the skyscraper is but its shadow
in a bathrobe
the year shall be among the palm and banana trees spurted from
the halo in water cubes
simple productive vast music surging safely
and the crimson bread for the future and multiple season
of old engravings of kings at the hunt prettily colored
pipe and box in the vase under the ace of spades piddler with
the birds and the cool clouds a vigilant boat in the beak
of the rock motor with sparks of good news the eiffel tower
is playing the rebeck
here each chair is soft and comfortable as an archbishop
ascetic enterprise guarantied monks at all figures—
this way, ladies—maison flake

(*Translated by* S. P.)

Francis Picabia

Francis Picabia is well known as a painter; he is probably not so well known as a writer; but he played an important part in the Dada movement, and his influence upon the literature of the decade has been an appreciable one. The following is from his Unique Eunuque, *which was published along with a self-portrait by the author.*

FROM "UNIQUE EUNUCH"

Miracle of free and easy punch-and-judy
Hammers the inexpressible palace
Of over-excited stars
The utter lack of interest
In words ram little
Besots the red brand of the dead world
Roller-blind leave him the crystal
Of a romantic dodge
At the school of bouquets blind couplets
Of a superior outdated intelligence
Think fury
Pretty rounds of
Praised heels his in till
Simplicity kindness
See shall
This extraordinary idea
In the pockets of his life
Heartless savoury herbs
Are you converted supplementary hours
Iodide of potassium catholic
The barracks behind
Story of awkward truths
I do not know if you understand.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Paul Morand

THE INFLUENCE OF DADA ON EARLY AFTER-WAR POETRY

(*From* DADA TO SOCIAL UNREST)

Paul Morand has been said to have tiptoed into literature, as a poet; for the poet preceded the prose writer. His first two books, verse volumes, appeared, as has been seen, during the period of Dada revolt against literature, and undoubtedly bear to a greater or less extent the impress of that movement. The author, a contributor to Littérature, *in a note on himself, tells us: "Paul Morand is the product of a high-speed era. He has struggled from the beginning against prolixity, dilution, 'literature,' eloquence, bookish culture, etc. . . ." Morand's poems, however, are far from being pure Dada, and in them is to be observed a certain transition to a mild, very mild, form of social unrest—or rather, occasional restlessness. This motive was not to be carried far. Morand, a diplomat like his close friend, Giraudoux, was to find a* geographic *outlet, in the discovery of a new and fascinating after-War world, and in doing so was to create a genre, one of which the English reader needs no description. He is best known as the author of* Ouvert la nuit *(1922); his later work has tended more and more to a species of* reportage, *which reaches a peak in his* New York.

M. Morand's collected Poèmes *were published in 1924 (the volume includes* Lampes-à-arc *and* Feuilles de température, *with new pieces). His published prose to date, in addition to* Ouvert la nuit, *consists of:* Tendres stocks, *1921 (sketches published in* Littérature; *the book has an Introduction by Marcel Proust)*; Fermé la nuit, *1923;* Lewis et Irene, *1924;* L'Europe Galante, *1925;* Rien que la terre, *1926;* New York, *1929;* Champions du monde, *1930;* 1900 A.D., 1931.

The first two poems given below are from Lampes-à-arc, *the third is from* Feuilles de température.

I

SAMPLE

my fingers are full of riot,
my derby hat is full of ideas,
my handkerchief is full of lamentations.
Effusive folks spoil my misery.
One would look in vain for a couple of hours of wild laughter
in the Great Writers library.
Optimism is a hygienic drink
invented by Emerson.
Damp miscreant crocodile,
J.–J. Rousseau sullies the Evian water.
A couple makes the acquisition
of a tube of reproductive paste
but nothing soothes their anguish.
Over the paving-stones
where an ovoid moon has already set up shop,
a Magenta sky stays blue-printed among
the jointed flues and celluloid trees.
As for me, I
jog along as best I can.

II

BUSINESS

5,000 dollars
to the one who proves
that a word can be heard in the factory
when they are casting the tubular boilers.
The chassis take suspended flight;
the crane shivers
over the steam-hammers.
I like that.
I drive my day at the speed of an aerial railway,
I invite my friends by megaphone,
I lunch standing up,
the stock-exchange movements unwind on the floor;
the Metropolitan rumbles in my legs.
I like that.

All this time,
upon a black divan,
my wife is holding out her hands to a woman friend.

III

ANOTHER JEW DEAD

It is because the regiment of killers is strictly governmental,
it is because the people are afraid of revolution
as of everything that might restore them to themselves, that is, to the state of nothingness that is theirs,
it is because they are unable to imagine any other well-being
than that of huddling about the State
as around a stove,
it is because men are glad to obey
and not to have to be free,
that there is frozen blood
on the Isaar quay
and the dead body of a Jew is there,
hands tied behind his back,
bare to the waist.
Very green against the snow,
high forehead under locks like wool,
he has taken on an Oriental majesty,
calm, as if aware that by his death
that part of him he knew to be immortal
were assured of never dying any more.
His cheeks bear the marks of shoe-spikes
and his battered mouth
sags, like a box that once was full of cries;
cries of an eternally rebellious race
shedding as needs the black blood of ever-flowing revolt
in the wine-press of Christian laws;
communicating, under the very corner-stones of the States,
between continents, through mysterious spouts,
(leaving the radios to the nationalistic propagandists and the cables to the arbitrations of the stock-exchange),
and he, among the great ones of this race,
with no other fatherland than his mind,
glad to be poor and forswearing any other possession than that of the Texts,

courtier of the ideal, taking his commission on each revolt,
nursing an acid thought corrosive of Arian doctrines,
endlessly generous and faithful to the truth,
under the mask of an eternal treason,
singularly redoubtable with it all.
That is why this corpse, robbed of its shoes,
is lying, on this frosty morning,
at the base of the Maximilianeum.

The children have put gramophone needles
under his nails.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE DEATH OF DADA

(1920)

One of the principles of Dada was to take nothing seriously, not Dada itself. "The absence of a system is a system in itself, but the most charming one there is." That "system in itself" proved to be the breaking-point. One of the manifestoes had declared that "The true Dada's are against Dada," and Dada's own early adherents did, indeed, soon turn upon it. One of the underlying principles of the movement being non-production, a number of members were expelled with some noise as they became successful men of letters. Valéry, Morand and others soon followed Cocteau out of the party. André Gide severed his connections, and the *Nouvelle Revue Française* promptly became a hostile organ. The conservative journals were naturally against the Dadaists, as were their readers, and Dada was now accused of being anti-patriotic and pro-German. At this point, even Tzara, the founder, took up a semi-equivocal attitude. In replying to Jacques Rivière, Tzara made a sweeping denial of "any responsibility for a school founded by journalists and commonly known as Dadaism. But after all, it's rather comical if a bunch of maniacs or of fellows who had an active part in the decomposition of the Germanic Empire should have started a school that I never had any desire to found." As for Rivière, he later backed ground, by publishing an article (*Nouvelle Revue Française,* August, 1920) in which he acknowledged his *"Reconnaissance à Dada."*

Rivière had spoken of "the death-odor that exhales from the system," and Jacques-Émile Blanche was convinced that "Dada can only go on existing by ceasing to be." And as M. Bouvier remarks, that is exactly what happened.

It was two years later, in a lecture at Weimar, that Tzara bestowed a belated epitaph upon his own progeny: "They began to break away and resign. The first one to turn in his resignation to the Dada movement was myself."

Philippe Soupault expressed a common attitude when, in *Le Bon apôtre* (1923), he wrote: "Slowly but surely, we lost contact and became self-enslaved. Some were afraid. The team-spirit is becoming rarer and rarer. I was ready. I preferred calling myself Philippe Dada to Philippe Soupault. . . . It's all over now! I write novels, I publish books. I keep busy! And that's that!"

THE JULES VERNE INTERLUDE: 1920-1924

(*From* THE IMAGINATIVE JOURNEY *to* SUPER-REALISM)

Following that reaction to the War which started some two years before the Armistice,—a pessimistic nihilism that found expression in a despairing "humor," a humor which was to evolve into the all-inclusive negations of Dada,—there came another, more objective and, it might be said, more wholesome one, in the form of a discovery of the after-War world. That world lay there glittering like a new-found toy, waiting to be played with once more, with all the zest of novelty, somewhat as the men of the latter fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries had done. The blinders of consuetude appeared to have dropped from the eyes of many, and Jules Verne and the story-books of childhood lived once more. The three names that stand for this impulse and this period are, probably, those of Paul Morand, Jean Giraudoux and Pierre Mac Orlan. It may be significant that two of these, Morand and Giraudoux, are in the diplomatic service. Young Europe, indeed, since the War, has been engaged in three sorts of journeying: the inward voyage of self-exploration; the outward voyage, or exploration of the environing physical world; and, deriving partly from each of the others, the journey of the imagination, of which we have an instance in Delteil, and which may be regarded as a step toward, or link with, *Surréalisme*.

Jean Giraudoux

Jean Giraudoux, born at Bellac in the Limousin, in 1882, a diplomat by profession, has evolved a distinct style of writing which some have labeled impressionism. This is hardly exact. He is a writer endowed with sensitivity to the point of virtuosity, and he exhibits a certain detached clairvoyance. In his early work, it is true, Giraudoux does appear to be concerned solely with catching and fixing the impression of the moment, but he was to evolve out of this into something larger, with greater breadth of canvas, a more intricate set of personae *and a set of very real underlying problems, to be posed if not solved. His landscapes have been termed soul-states, and they possess in fact, that character. Giraudoux, however, at base a poet with Symbolist leanings, is guided rather by feeling than by philosophy. His technique is the opposite of the photographic; he never gives us the cliché, the banal image; his eye sees always through his imagination, which enables him to discover unexpected relationships.* Suzanne et le Pacifique *(1923) may be regarded as the author's Robinson Crusoe. His first book,* Provinciales, *was published in 1909. His other works are:* L'École des indifférents, *1912;* Lectures pour une Ombre, *1918;* Amica America, *1918;* Simon le pathétique, *1918;* Elpénor, *1919;* Adorable Clio, *1920;* Siegfried et le Limousin, *1922;* Juliette au pays des hommes, *1924;* Bella, *1926.*

THE TIGER-MEN

By Jean Giraudoux

I had been called to the *Café de Cluny* by Dagot. Since 1906, the year I first made his acquaintance in that very café, at the table of habitués that I frequented, I meet him there once every four years. He is an administrator in the Congo, and once every three and a half years takes six months leave. He drops me a line, without even giving the spot where we are to meet, and I come. Outside of my habit of going to the United States every ten years, that is the lengthiest alternation, the most daring, the broadest unity of time, that I have introduced into the routine of my life. It is the leap-year-day of friendship, added to my ordinary calendar of friends and acquaintances. It is also about the only occasion I now have

of going into that quarter. From the terrace where I wait for Dagot, I again see the flora of the Cluny gardens, full of lilacs and quaint ruins. It is my fifth season, the one in which Romanic portals, prophets, and virgins bloom for me, and Merovingian tombs, vivacious and endowed with appetite, spring out of the earth. Since 1922, a linden-tree has died, a Saint Daniel has sprouted.

I enjoy coming before Dagot. Seeing me, he does not think of being disappointed, he has the impression of coming to his old café; Notre-Dame on the left, Cluny across the way, the Medical School to the right are sure proof to him of this identity. . . . As a matter of fact, on ordinary days, all there is left is the marble-tops of the tables, for even the chairs have been changed,—and every four years, for an hour, me. The same waiter succeeded in staying out four alternations, surmounted change and war and three successive owners, then disappeared, sweeping to ruin more of our recollections than a partial amnesia. He still remembered our tastes after four years, he recalled them to me, he did not seem to know the exact duration of our absence, kept us posted about the life of his daughter, who, between our three *apéritifs,* made her first communion, had jaundice, got married. He has disappeared. Likewise the manager, who simply died. Likewise the lavatory-lady, upon whom the shades descended the day of the Courneuve explosion. Likewise the little bell-hop, whose mother had a lover who was perpetually fighting with his other mistress, because she loved someone else; likewise, that other man who sometimes borrowed five francs from the little bell-hop.

The virgin forest grows back less brutally, less pitilessly than the forest of habitués,—under which, moreover, there slips a fauna, renewed every four years, of cats and dogs,—than this café, so very like a cemetery by reason of its marble tablets, about which appears, at the vermouth-hour, the mourning-throng of the nearest future-deceased,—at the coffee-hour that of the longest-doomed,—tablets without names engraved, unless it sometimes be in pencil, along with a sketch of the cashier. Influenza and the franc at 140 to the pound have made terrible ravages among the habitués of the *Café de Cluny,* and the once immutable progress of the picture-papers, on Saturdays, from the table nearest the counter to the table next the telephone, now obeys more modern and incomprehensible rules. The coffee alone remains unchanged, a horrible mixture that Dagot voluptuously sips like the milk of his youth. The chocolate-brown front has become green; the balls to keep mop-rags in have disappeared; the

waiter draws in sawdust, along the terrace, sawteeth instead of straight lines; the subscription to the *Débats* has been suppressed; even on Notre-Dame, if one wished, one might distinguish a few new stones, on Cluny, from here, a new window-pane; but Dagot, at sight of me, hurries up, and believes he is entering into the eternal.

Such is the re-appearance, the resurrection imposed upon me every four years, and for which I make over and dress myself up as I used to be. As a matter of fact, it is now the only resurrection of my past. The series of dinners given for me once a year, since my college entrance, by the old ladies who were friends of my grandmother or by the deputies my great-uncle knew, and for which I had to don a uniform of memories, and even bodily habits, an old baggage of allusions, is ended by death. I may now grow older in full liberty, become fat, reduce, have another glass of Port, without the yearly examinations given me, because they had seen me without a beard, by the widows of the inventor of sub-marines and Professor Connil. But, every four years, there is Dagot. This man who returns from the country that never changes, in which animals have lost the fewest current specimens since the deluge, in which days all the year round are equal and to the second alike, the two seasons immutable, comes to ask of me the sense of duration, the enjoyment of stability, and reduces me for a whole afternoon, drinking vermouths that will upset me a month and more, to immortality. Immortality, a hard corset for my generation, and hard, too, the task of resuscitating, re-locating the tastes one had at twenty, re-assuming the language of before the war.

Not to disappoint him, I appeal to my enduring qualities. First of all there are my way of ordering *Amer Picon,* that drink affected neither by hail, nor frost, nor sun, the drink of the treeless planet, my usual joke when calling for the mat for playing *piquet,* the box for playing *jacquet*. For the players of our table who played this double tournament with Dagot have disappeared, and to conceal their absence, I replace them. My phobia of games, my aversion for dice (for it appears I play dice, too), my love for women, my taste for tea, my hatred of *écarté,* subside and yield before Dagot. I should feel terrible about depriving him of his illusions, especially since he, inasmuch as he is Dagot, changes, has an abscess on the liver, an annoying heart. If I hold out two more times four years, I run a good chance of being freed and saved, and I shall then escape the only human check that keeps me as I was in 1906. Upon Paris, that background more shimmering than the jellyfish whose shape

it has, in a period when sentiments of an essence nonetheless pure, —courage, loyalty, frankness,—have become tainted, when the very lights of the streets, the illumination of every soul friendly or hostile, attack new optical nerves, I try to project my rays of the past. Why tell him that a daily imperceptible off-beat has estranged me from our common domain, and that a precipice separates us? That the poet whose identical stanza he quotes is no longer my only poet? That my my favorite wine is no longer white Bordeaux, nor my sport *jai-alai?* Moréas, Barsac, Chiquito, I take you up again for him, I have the impression of resuming old clothes. I have the impression that finding an old friend is a disguise.

It is five o'clock. It is the hour when from Fort-Archambault to Fort-Lamy, villages which have the peculiarity of not having any fort, the light gives the landscape the shade of what it contains. The hour at which Schweinfurth saw upon the Koussi hills a glow of copper, on the Chailles hills a glimmer of crystal. . . . Supervielle, too, has often told us the story of his little negress, golden-colored every evening at five. . . . He looks at the new waiter, the new cigarette-girl, the new cashier, consulting me with his eyes, as if they were a personnel especially attached to me. How old he has grown! Or rather, for at sight of me joy had thrown far from him the weight of the last four years, how suddenly old he grows under my eyes, offering me in these two hours, as our intimacy increases and he lets himself go, the film of the struggle he has fought out there, since our meeting in 1922, against age.

I moderate within myself the hypocrisy which slowly estranges the one Siamese twin who grows old well from the other who ages badly. I take his hand in which the veins have become to mine as the Congo to the Seine. I pretend to read it. A savage spear has pierced it, leaving the star of its entrance and exit, that large-diametered star which all those who were shot down at war had, the star that shows you will be rich, powerful, or die at a hundred. In his turn, he reads my right hand, without noticing that at least half these indications are already out of date. Brunettes, inheritances, deaths are suddenly plucked from my past and sent soaring into my future. It seems that I am going to meet for the first time an American woman, that soon she will write me her first letter. . . . Why not Péguy? At times, someone he knew, and who has changed, passes. I refrain from mentioning it.

But the Julian baths radiate their new bricks. Young girls, returning from the Sévigné institute, have short hair, which, he says, re-

juvenates them. Cluny, wisely washed by a keeper who deserves more than his title, is ten years younger. I have to struggle, fortunately helped by the falling night, to pretend to struggle, against the eternal youth of the world. Across the way, the Cluny department-store has done good business; the heads on pedestals of 1918, that had already become busts four years ago, are now full-grown women, in lingerie. . . . He asks no questions. . . . He has no idea that I, helpless dam, keep four years of the unknown from laying hold upon him. He tells me of his future paper on the variations of the idea of God among the Bantou fetishists, he talks to me as to the one who, more faithful than God, has not changed, and the smile I put upon my lips every four years to receive him, I recognize it today, it is nearly enough the smile of Buddha. . . .

We play. . . . We play the same stakes since 1908. . . . He has won the last three times. I will take my revenge the next. Then we separate. I never see him again during his visit. . . . He has touched me like a mile-post in a race. . . . It is especially his way of seeing again Notre-Dame, the Panthéon, the Odéon, all the trembling monuments I control from my seat like an immutable charioteer. . . . He leaves me now to see changing personages in immutable frames, his dropsical brother-in-law at the Ministry of the Interior, his childhood chum who guards the Venus de Milo in the Louvre. (How the Venus de Milo does change, though, how one always finds her different! Is she not a bit more bent? Does marble warp? . . .) With the duplicity of street-car No. 14, which for twenty years, likewise, has made its temporary stop in front of the café, he disappears. I rise, I throw off my diver's armor, and my formal air, and the *tics,* and the ritual jokes revived for Dagot, old as my youth.

But yesterday, our separation was more dramatic. We were finishing our game of *jacquet,* when he suddenly stopped talking. He was gazing at a neighbor, sitting sidewise on his chair and almost facing us. Dagot's aspect, his attention being so vivid, had changed. His aspect, which I had always known as tired and flabby, was keen. His hand, instead of drumming the table, was motionless and three-quarters open, as if to seize an arm. I had before me no longer the resting friend, the vacationing colonial I had always known, but the master of forests, of beasts, of cannibals, as he was over there, and this tanned man resumed the authority that whiteness of skin confers in central Africa.

"Look at our neighbor's eyes," he said.

The coachmen of Paris used to have epithets to designate the passersby grazed by their carriages who looked like abstractions. . . . Cholera. . . . Plague. . . . They thus immediately distinguished Parisians who had a particular life from those who were the elements, the symbols of a life, of a larger being. . . . But never had abstraction so invested a man as it had our neighbor; his eyes did not seem to belong to his face. On a pale surface, beneath meager blond hair, biting into the very bone of a slightly twisted nose, while the mouth was designed with a master's hand, the eye was carved in bleached wood, the eye of an idol. Concentric brows, wire lashes, snowy whites, a strip of blood against the nasal wall, and in a halo of opaline two crossed tar pupils. The lids could not be seen, could not be guessed. He never lowered them. To avoid Dagot's look, which he had noticed, he merely withdrew his eyes, profoundly, to the right or upwards. He did not try to turn, to move his face. His eyes made use against us of nothing of that which defends eyes, that is to say the whole body. He gave the impression of those men buried in sand, their lids cut off, and who can defend themselves from the sun and the vultures only by turning their pupils up into their foreheads. Suddenly, as Dagot called the waiter, he got ahead of him, paid, and left; but Dagot had already risen:

"Good-bye," he said, foregoing the tournament we usually had, to pay for the drinks, "I'll get to the bottom of it. . . . They're the same eyes. . . ."

"The same? What eyes?"

"You'll know tomorrow," he said, and he ran after the stranger, leaving me, in his haste, his cane and gloves for four years.

The next day, I received two envelopes, one of which contained a letter. Here is the contents of the other:

I have the honor of herewith laying before you the revelations which I have been able to obtain, after six months of research, on the "tiger-men" who terrorize the South-East of my subdivision.

Until lately, I had thought the tiger-men were vulgar assassins, but, the fact is not so; I have at last discovered that they are secret societies, sacrificing to a fetish, "Maghêna" in Yako (a word used to designate the leopard and the panther).

There exist in my subdivision two of these secret societies, one on the land of the Bouyalas, the other on the land of the Liabas. All that I have to say deals with the former, of which I have made a special study.

However, I have major reasons for believing the latter is not any differently organized, these two strips of land being adjacent.

Of the fetish "Maghêna"

For us, man is a being composed of a body and a soul; for the Bayaka, he is a being composed of a body, a soul and a double which I will call spirit.

The body and soul are obliterated by death, the spirit lives on and passes under the spiritual power of the head of the deceased's family.

The spirit is independent of the will of the human being who controls it, but that being is responsible for its actions.

To commit its evil actions, the spirit, alone or associated with other spirits, invariably assumes the form of some animal, real or imaginary; this animal may be of any species, except in the case of violent death—deaths other than by accident. In the latter case, it is, according to the kind of death, either a wild beast, or a crocodile, or the imaginary animal whose roar is the explosion of a firearm, the name of that animal being *"coumboula"* in Yako.

The members of the secret societies have exploited these beliefs, in order to avoid suspicion and to be able to continue their cannibalistic practices. They eat their victim under pretence that it is a wild beast, and those who are not conversant with their practices believe that it is a leopard or a panther invested by evil-working spirits, and proceed to seek the individual or individuals to whom these spirits belong and who sent them.

The fetish of the secret societies is terrible, in a different way—it is no longer a beast, the members having taken the beast's place. They have a simple earthen pot of native make and varying size. This fetish-pot bears the name of the beast: "Maghêna"; it contains crushed leaves which remain attached to the bottom as they dry.

In this pot, the ancestors poured the blood and cooked the flesh of their human offerings; from this pot, the ancestors drank the blood and ate the flesh of their victims.

The fetish or power resident in it thus comes, in a manner, from the condensation of human lives contained in it in the form of crushed leaves moistened with the blood of all the victims.

This fetish can be seen, bought or inherited only for human lives, never for money.

Lastly, the ordinary rules laid down by native inheritance customs are followed.

Of the Society of "Tiger-Men" of the Land of the Bouyalas Organization.—This secret society has three groups and each group two pots.

The chief of the society is at the same time chief of a group and of a pot.

The chiefs of groups are at the same time chiefs-of-pots.

Each pot has two sacrificers: the chief and his heir apparent, who work in turns. It is they who guard the fetish. The Society may have an unlimited number of initiates, who may drink and eat from all the pots.

Statutes.—The number of immolated lives must always be kept equal between the three groups, and, in the groups, between the two pots. The limit for establishing the balance, when it is broken, is about two years.

To have the fetish, the acquirer must sacrifice a man or a woman, whether the acquisition have for goal the replacing of a broken pot or the founding of a new sect.

At the death of a chief-of-a-pot, his heir, in entering upon his service, must sacrifice a man and a woman.

In both these cases, the man must be immolated first and the woman later, some time afterwards.

To see the fetish, that is to say to enter the Society, the novice must offer a man, woman or child as victim,—the day of the initiation, it is always a man who must be immolated. In exceptional cases, women may be admitted as members of the Society.

In these three cases, the victims must be chosen among the close maternal relatives of the one who offers them (mother, uterine brothers or sisters, uncle, aunt, niece or nephew).

To feed the pot outside of these two cases, the hunt must furnish the victims. The particular aim is at persons who are the object of the hatred, the jealousy, the resentment, the cupidity or the scorn of members of the Society.

If there is no excuse, an excuse is created: with this in view, accomplices will go to the individual whose death is desired, and ask him, for instance, immediately to lend them an important sum of money. The person will ask for a delay, say that he has not the sum; they will insist, and will repeat everywhere that he is a bad rich man, that they asked a tiny favor, and that he refused; the excuse has been created.

Any refusal on the part of a member of the Society to accept or to deliver a victim that the majority has selected entails his death.

Any refusal on the part of a novice, when he has been acquainted with the practices of the Society, to conform to them entails his death.

Any individual convicted of having revealed the secret to a stranger is condemned to death.

When, for any reason, the majority demands it, a member of the Society may be put to death.

Lastly, the members of this Society have neither passwords, nor signs nor marks of recognition. They can tell each other, it appears, at sight. In fact, I noticed something peculiar in the facial expression of these people; when I still knew nothing definite about this Society, I picked at once, by employing the census and my own observation, six tiger-men out of ten men presented, and I did not make a single mistake. It was this accuracy of judgment that enabled me to get all the revelations which are grouped in this report.

Meetings.—When a pot changes hands, the meeting of the pot-members under the three group-chiefs is necessary; likewise for the initiation of novices, there must be a meeting, but in this case, it is not obligatory that it be the group-chiefs' pot-members.

The members of each pot meet at the request of any one of them. This request must be made to the chief, who fixes the place and day of the meeting.

Deliberations.—The deliberations of secret committees always have to do with the choice of a victim. The one who requested the meeting takes the floor, names the person he wishes to sacrifice, and gives the reason for which he asks his death; two sides are formed—the stronger wins, and all the other side can do is to accept.

The chief cannot impose his veto: the death of a man cannot be decided without his consent, but if he refuses to give it, it is he who is put to death.

Thus, the principal object of the chief is to weaken the party opposed to him, so as to be able to impose his will and to spare the members of his family. But he must act with prudence and moderation, or he might weaken his pot and so be at the mercy of his neighbors.

The chief ordinarily restores the balance of power in his own favor by the use of poison, when his party has become the weaker one.

Lastly, when the victim has been chosen, it is at these meetings that details and preparations are discussed and decided upon.

The Drama.—The drama consists of four phases:

1. The kidnapping of the victim;

2. The sacrifice;

3. The operation which consists of abolishing the traces of the sacrifice;

4. The alarm.

Kidnapping of the victim.—This is the most dangerous and delicate operation.

For two or three days, the confederates, with their hands, make wild-beast tracks around the village, to avert suspicion, and also to frighten the people and keep the latter from venturing out at night.

On the appointed day, all the pot-members meet at a point agreed upon in the forest,—a torch is lit. The chief takes the leaves, puts into one pot white leaves, into another red, into the other black, and dilutes these colors in water. With the elders, he then prepares all those who are to approach the village; with this in view, they strip, and, using their index-finger, cover body and face with white, red, and black spots;—whereupon, the business begins.

Everyone goes to the post assigned him,—the two or three most nimble confederates enter the hut of the victim, seize him by the neck, and drag him out to where two or three others are waiting to receive him, then bind him and carry him to the edge of the forest;—there, the rest of the band seize him and transport him to the place of the sacrifice. They find the chief, with the pot and his knife, seated near the fire he has kindled. The victim is deposited at his feet.

The sacrifice.—Immediately, the victim is laid out upon his stomach; the chief stands at his right, next to his head; a man next to him holds up the victim's right arm; a third stands on the left, puts his hands to the victim's eyes and mouth and forces him to offer up his throat; a fourth holds the victim's feet, and a fifth unbinds the thongs about his neck, while the others surround the victim. If it is a relative who is being immolated, the chief says a few words, deplores the death of his children, and urges the bystanders to use moderation; if it is a stranger, he rejoices at his luck; this done, he arranges the pot with the crushed leaves, which possess the virtue of giving the guests great calm, and cuts the victim's throat. At sight of the blood, the dripping knife in his right hand, arms stretched, body bent forward, he begins to move his body, as a dog who has found his lost master, singing in a low tone: *"Sanguilanou, Mbitchi, Sanguilanou, Sangiulanou, Sanguilanou"* (Let us show our contentment, we have found meat). All those present do the same, and take up the incantation in a chorus, until the blood

has done flowing. The chief then takes the pot, drinks, and has each one present drink; the blood is consumed smoking-hot.

Next, the victim is laid upon his back, his head having been severed from his trunk, his cheeks are slit, and his tongue is cut out, split, roasted, divided among the guests, and eaten rare.

Then, the chest is opened with a hatchet; the heart, the liver, the lungs and the spleen are withdrawn, the right arm is cut at the wrist and elbow, the forearm is skinned, the flesh is removed and the rest is thrown away. The chief cuts it all into as many parts as there are members, reserving for himself a larger slice of the heart, then puts it all into the pot and places the pot upon the fire. When the contents of the pot are half-cooked, the chief gives each one his portion, and when everyone has finished eating, the sacrifice is over.

The third phase of the drama, consisting of abolishing the traces of the sacrifice, then takes place.

Third phase: The head is scraped with a knife and thrown away; or else, the skull is separated from the rest, which is crushed; and then, all thrown away.

The body is cut in two, either at the waist or from the left shoulder to the right leg; the legs and pelvis in the first case, the legs, the pelvis, the left side, and the left shoulder in the other case are left on the spot; the rest is hacked and scattered.

Others place the whole body on a tree-trunk or a block of stone and reduce it to a pulp, which they scatter in all directions.

The chief takes part in all this.

When all is over, he wipes his knife with a piece of palm waist-cloth, puts it into the pot with the rag, covers the pot with the skin of the front of a man's chest, and carries it to its hiding-place, which is merely a hole made in the ground, about elbow-deep and the size of the pot. He puts it at the bottom of the hole, covers it over with leaves, and lays a piece of dead wood over all.

During this time, the others return to their villages.

The Alarm: Toward three or four in the morning, the confederates whose huts are nearest that of the victim, give the alarm by shouting, "come, come, the tiger has just carried off so-and-so." Everyone runs out, the disappearance of the victim is duly acknowledged, and all weep while waiting for daylight to come. Only then do they start following up the tracks; those who are not in the secret, stricken by fear, generally wait in the village for the results of the search, while the others prowl about the neighborhood and come back, an hour or two later, to announce that the body has not been

found, or else, that only part of it has been found. The drama is over.

The business does not always succeed. It may happen that the victim succeeds in freeing himself, recognizing his kidnapers and shouting out their names. They try to kill him and flee; the attempt has failed; the confederates agree to hush the matter up and, if necessary, to pay a blood-price to the victim's relatives. If there are any bothersome witnesses, their death is assured. Finally, if the matter comes before the authorities: either the accused makes a denial, in which case it is difficult to convict him, if the members of the pot to which he belongs desire to save his head; or else, he confesses—and one can be sure that he was forced to do so, threatened as he was with death by the members of the Society. He will give a trumped-up version of the crime to waylay suspicion and to preserve the secret.

The principal object in these cases is to find the body, so as to ascertain whether there was a crime or a sacrifice and, consequently, whether one has to do with a murderer or a secret society. The details I have gathered throw an entirely new light upon this question.

I still have to speak of the consecration of pots and the initiation of novices into the mystery.

Consecration of Pots.—Here, in order of age and size, are the pots of the Society that I have observed:

1. The pot of the chief of the Society.
2. The pots of the chiefs of groups.
3. The pots of the chiefs of sub-groups.

For the consecration of a pot, the presence of these three classes is necessary.

A man is first immolated; the four pots being placed in order of size, the blood is run into the largest; then the chief takes it and pours blood into the other three, still following the order in which they are placed; before pouring the blood into the pot to be consecrated, he shakes up what remains in his own, in order to mix it with the crushed leaves that are at the bottom. When this is done, he drinks from his pot, and offers the drink to the chiefs of groups, then to the participants. He does likewise for the others, except for the new one, which he does not touch.

The tongue is then eaten completely.

The heart, liver, lungs, spleen and the flesh of the forearm are cut by the chief into as many portions as there are guests, plus one; the portions for the guests are cut into three, and the whole thing is

put into the large pot to be cooked, the distribution between the three consecrated pots being effected as in the case of the blood, except that, into the new one, only the part destined for it is put.

The contents of the three large pots are eaten, that of the small one left; when the meal is finished, the small is put into the large and carried to the hiding-place.

The next evening, the members meet again. The contents of the small pot are slightly heated and distributed among the guests.

A short while later, a woman is immolated, the ceremony being the same. Thereafter, the pot can be used without the aid of its elders and can receive the blood of victims of both sexes.

Initiation of Novices.—The novice becomes a member of the Society once he has assisted at a ceremony and partaken of the feast. A man is immolated at this occasion. The day of the ceremony, the father of the novice, for instance, tells him not to leave the village in the evening as he has a secret to impart to him. When the victim has been taken, the father calls his son and tells the lad to follow him; when they are near the place of the sacrifice, he gives him an inkling of the truth, covers his face and body with white, red and black spots, puts a knife into each of his hands and leads him to the victim. The chief receives him by saying: "Do not be afraid; see, your brothers, your uncles, all your relatives are here; you could no longer stay away; I have decided to let you in on our secret; you shall see what we do."

The chief then has him kneel facing him, cuts the victim's throat and, as soon as the blood has run, takes a pinch of crushed leaves from the pot and drops the blood upon the novice's eyes, remarking that it will give the initiate a "cold" heart—he then invites the newcomer to rise, and the ceremony proceeds without change.

That day, the novice does not partake of the feast; his portion is set aside and served heated to him the next evening. For, the chief tells him, if he partook of the feast that very day, he would fall gravely ill.

What is the object of these fetishistic practices?—The informer told me that he was doing it out of vengeance and for his own pleasure; for, he added, when one is used to such practices and deprived of them for a while, the mere sight of a human being gives one the desire to cut his throat and drink his blood. The blood is good, but not the rest.

Is it to avenge oneself for the eloquence, the courage, the strength, the vigor of the victim that these qualities are stamped out in their

attributes? Or, on the contrary, to appropriate them to one's self? The informer says no, that in drinking the blood, in eating the tongue, heart and right forearm of the victim, he was merely conforming to the custom of his ancestors.

Should one connect these fetishistic practices with any religion? I leave the task of answering that to others, more learned than I on the subject.

I will conclude in applying the above data, by giving a view of the ravages which have been caused since the coming to power of the Society's present chief in 1907-08.

For the sake of greater lucidity, I will take the names of the families in each of the groups that compose it, *viz.*, in order of importance: Dibamba, Bouyala and Boumouêllé.

Here is the present composition of the six group-pots and the number of adepts:

Groups	Pots	Number of Initiates per Pot	Number of Initiates per Group
Dibamba.....	Mbanga	15	23
	Mallemba	8	
Bouyala.....	Yaouri	9	18
	Longo	9	
Boumouêllé.....	Malissaho	9	15
	Ilounga	6	
Number of members of the Society.....	.....	.....	56

Let us take the Dibambas group as our basis, since it is the most numerous.

For the initiations, its members had to furnish 23 persons.

For the installation of the chiefs-of-pots, 2 men and 2 women were immolated, all being taken from the heart of the group's family; in all, 27 victims.

To maintain equality among them, the two other groups each had to sacrifice 27 persons, making for the whole society a total of 81 victims in 8 or 9 years.

This figure is certainly below the actual truth, for the products of the hunt are not included.

I will not insist upon the consequences that the spread of such practices would entail for the future of the country, nor upon the necessity of energetically stamping these practices out.

The creation of a temporary post in the midst of the regions where this society is active is a necessity of the near future: not less than half of my subdivision is involved.

"My dear friend," said Dagot, "what a trail I have found! Excuse my rapid departure. I caught the man, and what a story!" As for the letter, it was very short. "Eyes like his never lie. I will tell you all about it in four years."

(*Translated from the French by* Harold J. Salemson)

Pierre MacOrlan

Pierre MacOrlan was born at Reronne, in 1883. The bulk of his work, from Les Bourreurs de Crâne (*1917*), *belongs to the after-War period. His writing career began in 1911, with the publication of* Les Pattes en l'air. *Three other before-the-War books followed:* Les Contes de la pipe en terre, *1912;* La Maison du Retour écoeurant, *1912; and* La Bête conquerante, *1914. From his earliest work on, MacOrlan has shown himself to be at once a humorist and a* fantaisiste *of extraordinary gifts. His passion for the fantastic is, doubtless, his most distinguishing characteristic. He is fond of continental maritime settings, and upon occasion, a social note creeps into his writings. His exotic imagination, seeking to penetrate and solve the mystery of things, has given him a lasting place in the post-bellum literature; as an adventure-story-writer, he has hardly an equal.*

The later MacOrlan bibliography consists of: L'U-713, *1917;* La Clique du café Brebis, *1917;* Les Poissons morts, *1917;* La Fin, *1918;* Bob Bataillonnaire, *1918;* Le Chant de l'équipage, *1918;* Petit manuel du parfait aventurier, *1919;* A bord de l'Étoile Matutine, *1920;* Le Nègre Léonard et Maître Jean Mullin, *1921;* La Cavalière Elsa, *1922;* Malice, *1923;* La Vénus internationale, *1923;* Les Pirates de l'Avenue du Rhum, *1925;* Aux lumières de Paris, *1925;* Images sur la Tamise, *1925;* Marguerite de la nuit, *1926;* Port d'eaux mortes, *1926;* Sous la lumière froide, *1926. The author has published, in addition, two volumes of verse;* L'Inflation senti-

mentale, *1923, and* Simone de Montmarte (*followed by* L'Inflation sentimentale), *1924.*

From this, it may be seen that M. MacOrlan's pen is a prolific one.

BY THE LIGHT OF LANTERNS

The first lantern scooted over the ship's bridge as though borne on invisible and diminutive legs, for the form of the one who carried it, mingled with the pitch-black of the sky, was indistinguishable. A torch caught up the fugitive gleam, and its light revealed the lantern-bearer as a huge, emaciated figure, whose smoke-dried visage displayed three terrifying apertures, two eyes and a mouth. The nose, so thin as to be imperceptible, appeared to have been eaten away by some abominable malady.

The lantern-bearer raised his light, so that it fell on the one with the torch, and the face of the latter was seen to be very much like that of the other. The three tremendous gaps in each face gave the two a common cadaverous likeness.

By the poop-deck, an ancient structure if there ever was one, other lanterns were changing place, like goblin lights at the entrance of a cemetery. In the starless sky, sombre masses of sails bent over the silent ship like clouds puffed by a tempest. The plash of the ship's stem, plowing its way, was distinctly audible. A confused sound of bare feet, their whereabouts revealed chiefly by thuds along the rigging, preceded a sudden flaring of the lanterns, which lighted up, one by one, like luminous flowers in the black fields on the borders of Acheron.

By the light of the lanterns, the night watch was hoisting the rigging and running about in the shrouds. This strange spectacle might have passed as a funereal amusement in the land of dead souls. The uproar increased, and the grinding of pulleys mingled confusedly with the cries of curlews, skimming the silvered crest of the restless void.

In order to facilitate the activity of this maritime hive, a seaman raised his torch at arms' length; its gleam rode against the black sky and, on the bridge, cut to shreds the immense and comical shadows which, suddenly elongated, suddenly shortened, gave rise to a fantasy that made it impossible to identify the owner of any shadow—who was, after all, perhaps, but the shadow of his shadow.

Occasionally, a bright-colored cloth, yellow as butter, enveloping a carronade, would light up in a swift flash the brass work of cannon, rudely covered by a tarpaulin. At the foot of the main-mast, a tremulous, broken voice arose. It was that of a man singing:

When I adjusted your cockade
And turned your black neck round,
It was because I then was bound
To see Camarde, the naughty maid.

He stopped short, like a machine that had run down, and another, behind a lantern, chuckled. In a weak voice, the man finished the song.

The little laughter of the old men, like the sound of grain being shelled, spread among the shrouds, from group to group about the cannonry, then in process of being polished.

A commandant with a speaking trumpet was endeavoring to bring order out of the confusion, but on account of the wind, which sang melodiously through the rigging, the only sound to be made out was a sort of *"Oua, oua, ouao."* The boatswain's whistle reassembled the lanterns, some of which had gone out. On the horizon, a narrow band of livid light indicated the line of separation between the blackness of sky and sea.

A thin, broken voice, which might have been that of the previous singer, stammered: "L-l-larboard watch a-a-head."

There was only one lantern left on the bridge. A man's voice spoke: "It's another day."

. . . . .

The glimmer of sunrise and that of a lamp were striving with each other in the cabin of the *Flying Dutchman.* The night watch already had betaken themselves to sleep, now that the sun had come once more to diffuse the gilding rays of his great and ambulant mystery.

Well steered by its masters against those rapid currents which lose themselves about the poles, the big ship, an eternal wanderer, now made for unknown seas, far from the frequented paths of men, in order that its crew might enjoy a daytime repose without being on the alert and without having to listen for the unpleasant sound of a trumpet, calling the dead to their post of combat.

The sailors aboard this good ship, the hardened wood of which

had stood the test of time, owed allegiance to a certain perjured captain, who, like the land-holder, Juan Espera-en-Dios or Boutte-dieu, roamed the seas, the paths across the plains, the woods and villages of the world with no new sight ever to greet his eye.

The captain bore the name of Peter Maus. He was a native of Düsseldorff and had been immobilized by death under the aspect of a skeleton-like old dotard, wearing for two hundred years the identical costume he had worn as a living being, at the time he had traded for Holland. He had been a good spender, then, with the sons of Amsterdam, who were skilled in the practice of a wholesome and peaceable debauchery, accompanied by numerous divertisements of a more or less gross nature.

The love of women, so far from being able to save him from his destiny, had not been able to triumph over that other destiny which impelled him incessantly toward new adventures, which he always hoped would be more thrilling than any gone before; and now, alone with his secret, in the company of his crew, he was sailing the seas with a hundred outlawed rascals and a handful of imbeciles who had been shanghaied aboard the big ship freighted with despair.

The lieutenant belonged to the same generation as the captain. He was a Norman of Dieppe, Pierre Radet by name, commonly known as Little Pierre. He knew Peter Maus' secret and, like the latter, aspired feverishly to a repose for which he dared not hope. In the solitude of the cabin, populated with world-maps and compasses of a form long since fallen into desuetude, these two would sit, their heads between their hands, studying the charts and keeping a sharp lookout for the reef they longed to strike, which should plunge them once more into a real death, a death which should be no mere legend but an eternal rest. But in spite of the precision of their manoeuvrings, the bewitched currents always kept the *Flying Dutchman* far from shipwreck and destruction.

The day watch having been told off, while the remainder of the crew took such repose as they could in the ship's broadsides, under the pale light of the northern sun, which spread a great cloth of golden spangles over the sea, Peter Maus and Little Pierre would experience an envious desire to eat and drink. Their mummified organisms, however, could serve them no longer; their needs did not correspond to their desires. They were animated by a ferocious hatred of the earth and of the old life they had led among the living; and accordingly, they would clench their fists and amuse themselves in the patient and edifying contemplation of the punish-

ments which they proposed to visit upon the living, if, some day, divine grace should permit them to share once more in life.

In their sacrilegious ignorance, these two old madmen, without being aware of the fact, would be praying to heaven.

"O God," they would groan, "grant that we may meet upon our way but one living being, fat and chubby, and grant, in thy all-powerful kindness, that we may torture him and make him suffer to suit our pleasure."

And they would add, childishly: "Grant, O God, that we may make a meal of bread and sausages, just once more."

Then, Pierre Radet, known as Little Pierre, would take from the cupboard an empty bottle and two glasses. He would place them dreamily on the table, brushing them off with the flap of his round-jacket. Then, he would go through the motions of pouring wine, and first one and then the other would go the glass to his withered old lips and pretend to drink.

Madness would shake them, suddenly, and the bottle would be hurled to the floor. The bottle would break.

Little Pierre would lament his luck and begin whimpering: "Don't break the damned bottle, for the love of God. Soon, or we shan't have any more bottles, and then, we'll not be able to pretend that we're drinking."

Sometimes they would suck on a long empty white-clay pipe, and then, with their eyes sunken in their emaciated sockets, they would recall the good old days and hate life to their hearts' content, that life so fertile in pleasures, that life the gestures of which they sought, in their distress, to reconstruct by means of a sterile and imaginative parody.

. . . . .

"After thinking it over well," said Little Pierre, "it is better to be dead. For the weak point with us, when we were sailors, was putting into port; in one night, the result of six or seven months' labor would run aground in the purse of Ninon la Bretonne."

"You forget Angela Cecchi of Palerma," said Peter Maus.

"Ah, yes, Angela Cecchi and her little place at the foot of the Pellegrino."

Once more, they would plunge into their memories. Each of them, in his fleshless head, under its cover of dried skin, would launch forth upon a weird sea of images, at once naïve and perverse, at times vague, at times endowed with the perfection of absolute design.

"There is a God," Peter Maus would declare. "Who could doubt it, seeing that we have been damned by Him for all eternity? It was different when I was a child—I don't care to recall how many years ago that was—I believed in God then, all right, but I wasn't sure of anything. I said my prayers like the other children, as a matter of precaution, and in order to put all the chances on my side. Since then, I have acquired the absolute certainty of a divine providence."

"Well, Maus," Little Pierre would speak up in his turn, "does that mean that we're going to have to sail the long stretch without putting in for all eternity?"

"I could eat an orange," Maus would remark, clacking his skinny mouth, which was like an old leather purse.

"Imbecile," Little Pierre would reply, shrugging his shoulders.

He would reach out his hand for the bottle, and the two again would go through the motions of drinking. Their shoulders would shake in foolish laughter. Clinking their glasses, they would repeat a tremulous toast:

"Here's to you, youngster."

"Same to you, sailor."

Whereupon, Little Pierre would arise and, stumbling like a drunken man, would begin to curse roundly the sea, mankind, and everything under the sun.

In the broadsides, the crew listened with the smiles of veteran connoisseurs to the vociferations of the two old dotards. Swinging in their hammocks, they were not asleep. They, too, pretended—pretended to sleep, though sleep was an unimportant matter to them, since they were dead; all day long, they dreamed madly, haunted by life-like images of unfulfilled desires.

The sun dived once more into the cold waters of the Antarctic sea, and with the first stars, the watch came down. Their coarse boots clattered on the gunroom ladder, and the night life of the ship began again. As a precaution against meeting a vessel manned by living beings, the tarpaulins covering the cannon were removed, and, on the bridge at the foot of the mainmast, guns and long-bladed knives with handles of rough wood were stacked. A whistle from the captain of the watch called the men to their posts. Some of the crew, who were little more than skeletons, hardly could stand against the wind, which filled the sails like leather bags, while others, twisted into pitiful shapes, looked like grapevines in a storm.

Towards midnight, the blind lookout, who had been stationed at his post as a jest, gave a long raucous blast upon his horn.

Already, however, the crew of the *Flying Dutchman* were leaning over the gunrails, regarding with open mouths a terrifying and luminous apparition, which was bearing down upon them with the regular, rhythmic breathing of a good healthy beast.

A long row of lamps adorned the sombre mass of an enormous vessel. The crew of the *Flying Dutchman* contemplated, without a word, this magnificent craft, which was, perhaps, to be their liberator, and which seemed even more phantom-like than their own.

"It's the end!" cried Peter Maus, all of a sudden. "Lads, we're really going to die this time. Down on your knees, lads, and thank God, as you see me doing."

All fell to their knees and beat their heads on the deck, in the hope of a catastrophe which should put an end to their cruise.

They did not raise their heads at the sound of a distant and rather dull detonation. Suddenly, a great sheaf of flames spurted up from the brilliantly lighted vessel, and a shower of débris of all sorts fell on the deck of the *Flying Dutchman*. Instinctively, since they had nothing to fear, the crew raised their elbows, protectingly.

When they opened their eyes, the sea was deserted. In place of the huge ship, there was nothing but an expanse of smooth water.

Peter Maus shook his fist in the face of heaven, and the blind lookout, high among the shrouds, laughed.

It was then that a feeble cry from the sea caused every mother's son to pick up his ears. It was, without doubt, the wail of a little child. The voice was small and hoarse. One could picture a baby, with its wry and rumpled face, shaking its chubby fists and kicking up its little feet.

"Let down the long boat," ordered Peter Maus.

The ancient pulleys groaned, as, not far away on the bosom of the sea, the cry of an infant arose, unmistakeably, on the air.

II

In a violent odor of iodine, seaweed, and wet wood, the long boat was drawn up, and with it, a very small baby in a three-piece hood, with a red face and little fingers perpetually in motion. It might have been some ten or twelve months old. Its big round eyes surveyed without fright the funereal visages of the dead seamen who crowded about it.

"Faith," said Little Pierre, "it's really a live baby. It is round and well formed."

All about the infant, the ghostly figures pressed, gazing upon their prey with eager eyes. They examined it with great exaltation, but their glances revealed nothing of what was in their inmost thoughts.

At daybreak, Peter Maus and Little Pierre, who had installed the child in the ship's cabin, began considering how they were going to contrive to bring it up. A ship peopled by dead men who did not eat naturally contained no provisions.

"This child is alive," said Peter Maus. "There can be no doubt of that. Can a live being go on living among dead men? I do not think so. We might kill the brat, and perhaps, a little dead one like him would liven things up a bit aboard ship, with his pretty little ways and all that sort of thing, which one expects to find in a child of good bringing-up."

"This child is too small to give us much amusement," replied Little Pierre. "Let's bring him up till he's ten; at that age, on the day of his first communion" (and Little Pierre crossed himself), "we will kill him; and then, we shall have a little dead cabin boy to lighten our labors."

"Your plan is adopted," said Peter Maus, "and we shall look about among the hulks of this craft we have frightened into shipwreck to see if we can find some sort of nourishment for this little milk-lapper."

. . . . .

A leading French newspaper carried in its columns the following information, which is curious enough in its way:

Shanghai, July 10, 1921.

"The Japanese cruiser, *Nogi,* returning from target practice, recently encountered, in the offing of the bay of Along, a vessel which, with its fires extinguished, was making in a southerly direction. Having given the usual signals, the commodore gave the order to stop the ship and fitted out a whale-boat to board the mysterious craft.

"It was found that the vessel in question, a Swedish freighter, had been completely plundered and abandoned. It contained no provisions of any sort. There was one curious detail. In the officers' cabin, the cover had been laid, and a few morsels of food were in the last stage of putrefaction.

"It is difficult to imagine the motives which had forced the crew

of this ship instantly to abandon their occupations. The affair has the appearance of a Bolshevik atrocity."

This dispatch, read by thousands, did not catch the attention of the crowd. It conveyed a superficial hint of romantic adventures, but it was not detailed enough to be highly interesting. Strictly speaking, the discovery made by the cruiser, *Nogi,* had in it the elements of a romance of rare perversity, but one, of course, which could lay no claim to the approving interest of serious folk.

There was no one in the world, not even the most credulous sailor, but would have had his doubts, had he been told that at the bottom of this mysterious drama was to be found a tiny infant, picked up by one of the crew of damned souls aboard the eternal *Phantom Ship.* One survivor of the adventure there was who, after a few glasses in a tavern swept by seaside breezes, had a tale to tell: of how, one night in the Pacific, his ship had been assailed by an invisible crew, by the light of innumerable lanterns. His tale was listened to with the respect commonly accorded a *raconteur* of quality, without any one's believing a word of the narrative.

. . . . .

The *Flying Dutchman,* commanded by its skipper, Peter Maus, continued on its endless tack and ran up the black flag in place of the one it originally had flown. Frequently, in the middle of the night, the harsh sound of a trumpet would give the signal to clear the decks for action, and fifty lanterns would scamper over the bridge. And the *Flying Dutchman,* rising in all its haughtiness out of the darkness, would hurl forth its adventurers to plunder the goods of the living.

The child prospered among the dead. Little Pierre patiently fattened it up with the aid of bottles of preserved milk. Sometimes, they would spread a coverlet on the bridge, and every one would come to look at the baby, wallowing in its bed of soft wool. The dead men, clustered about the rosy infant, would take on the appearance of stones and old marbles. Parts of their skeletons at times showed through their dry, cracked skins. They called the child "the Rosy King"; and as a matter of fact, he did resemble those roses, at once fragile and robust, which flourish in little village churchyards.

The Rosy King grew and learned to repeat docilely the words which were taught him. He expressed himself a little in all languages, speaking all of them in an antiquated form.

During the night, he would play about, leaping like a familiar

demon over the lanterns and climbing up to the lookout to tease the blind old salt who was always so restless. He would roll on his back like a cat, catching the dead men round their pins and crying: "Come on, now, you old beast, give me my stick." And the crew would find much amusement in it all, and think, "What a pretty little dead boy Rosy King will make. For all eternity, we shall be able to refresh our souls with his gestures, his words, his cries, and his little hurts."

In the cabin, between the map of the world and the maritime charts, among the piles of preserve-bottles and biscuit-packages, which had been taken aboard from plundered cargoes, the young Rosy King would listen benevolently, with his knees on a stool, to the monotonous counsels of the captain and the second officer.

"How is it," the child would ask, "that you are so different from me? And besides, you have such a funny odor. And you don't eat like me nor drink milk and sweet water."

"That," Peter Maus would reply, "is because you are now living in the kingdom of the dead. Here, on this ship, we are all dead ones."

"What is a dead one?" Rosy King would inquire.

"You don't understand."

"Ah, I want to be dead like you, like Little Pierre, like Gruida, the boatswain, and like Loiselet who plays the flute. I want to be dead like you, so I can have a pretty brown skin, and so I can crack the bones in my hands. I'd like to run over the bridge with a little lantern."

"We were just like you, fat and chubby youngsters, when we were alive."

"Where do the alive people live," the child would ask, "on the English coast?"

Peter Maus gave up trying to explain the double mystery of life and death, but each day, Rosy King would listen to the former's curses against those enigmatic beings, the living, whom the captain held responsible for his own damnation.

Certain nights, under the diabolical light of the lanterns, the dead crew would dance, hurling abominable threats at the living. Having gone through the motions of drinking, they would imitate the excesses of drunken men; and then, they would light a fire in their empty pipe-bowls, and their mouths would suck in, voluptuously, the green and yellow flames.

The young Rosy King was now twelve years old. He presided at these celebrations, playing horseback with a cannon. He would clap

his hands, ravished by the spectacle, which for him was the most amusing one he could dream of.

"One day, I shall be dead like them," he thought, and his little bosom would heave with pride.

III

Clad in a coat of scarlet cloth, which formerly had belonged to Peter Maus, and which an ingenious spectre had retailored, after a half-way fashion, Rosy King had further obtained from Little Pierre, who was inclined to spoil the child, a tiny lantern, which he would brandish by night as he galloped over the worm-eaten deck of the *Flying Dutchman.*

He loved this life by one's wits aboard the famous ghost-ship, and he was vastly amused by the terror-stricken faces of poor mariners, surprised in mid-sea by the rapid passage of the vessel, the crew of which were the victims of so wondrous a punishment. But he loved, above all, to stand against the poop-house and listen to the dead as they took vengeance on the living. The child had come to consider these living beings as mysterious, cruel, perverted in character, and with unsavory pasts behind them,—as a people from whom he must guard himself at all costs.

Later, thanks to the conversation of Little Pierre, he had created for himself a conception of life that was all his own, one that the infernal environment in which he had been reared only tended to strengthen. Life impressed him as being a distant catastrophe, so distant that he was unable precisely to estimate its dimensions; but he had a frightful chill, every time he thought of it at all attentively. His youth, however, did not permit of any but the briefest meditations. And so, he grew up, in the broadsides of this legendary ship, without any point of comparison which would give him a chance for a reasonable appraisement of his exceptional situation.

Then, one day, Peter Maus, contemplating the childish grace of the lad, who had grown to quite a size on a diet of fishes, which he now caught with considerable skill, conceived the idea of redeeming past sins by one good deed. So he said to Little Pierre:

"Lieutenant, the more I think of it, the more I am struck with the idea that Providence, in sending us, upon a wreck, this little living creature, was merely trying us out. Don't you believe that we would be acting in accordance with the ends of Providence, if we were to give the child back to life? True enough, the presence

among us of a little rascal of a dead lad could not help relieving the bitterness of our fate; but I do not think that God has placed him in the path of the *Flying Dutchman* to meet that same fate. What do you think?"

Little Pierre brought the long bones of his hands together over his knees.

"I think the same as you," he replied, "that it would be best to set the child ashore; and perhaps, if we did so, it would bring us a little divine favor."

"Very well, we'll set him ashore, along the coast, tomorrow night; yes, we'll set him ashore along the Breton coast, near Auray, on holy ground. Let's be sure to put all the chances on our side."

"You old villain," remarked Little Pierre.

Whereupon, Peter Maus straightened himself and yelped: "Cross yourself! you swine! cross yourself! You blasphemer! You Judas, you! You Judas!"

They fought, and the clashing of their arms was like the sound of wooden sticks.

. . . . . .

The following day, shortly before nightfall, Peter Maus called Rosy King to him and, pointing out with one finger a grey band on the horizon, said to him: "There is the land from which you came and to which you are going to return. You cannot stay with us any longer. God will not permit it. . . . . I have spoken to you angrily about God sometimes, but I was wrong; I spoke as all the damned do, as you will understand, too late, if you ever come to this state. . . . . Almighty God has given you life, and we cannot make a dead one out of you."

The child began to cry: "Let me die by your side, O Peter Maus, and I will make you laugh by imitating old Gruida when he plays the flute."

But Peter Maus shook his head, and the lad, shrivelled up with despair, threw himself down on the bridge and set up a weird wail that was enough to tear the heart out of any man.

"Of course, you couldn't have avoided this," grumbled Little Pierre. "It would have been better to set him ashore without telling him all that."

Night came, and the Southern Cross shone in the sky. With all sails filled, the *Flying Dutchman* soon left the tropics behind, in a

supernatural effort to take advantage of the favoring winds. Soon, the quiet harbors of old Europe hove into view.

The skeleton crew, drawn up on deck, gazed at the lad as he stood, shivering with fright, in his scarlet coat of ancient cut. The lanterns on the bridge outlined the dark shadow of each man, but all the light streamed on Rosy King's white face and chattering teeth. Then, there came a noise like the rustling of wings, and the sound of the yawl, brushing the ship's sides, was heard.

"Come, Rosy King," said the captain, "say good-by and pray for us. Here's a little silver to buy candles. The first woman you meet will tell you what you should do for the repose of our souls."

"I don't want to live!" screamed Rosy King. "Let me be, Peter Maus, let me be!"

They lowered the lad down into the yawl, and Peter Maus took the tiller. The oars ground in their tholes. Soon, a black line hollowed itself out into a semi-circle.

"Attention," commanded Peter Maus, "back water all around."

The yawl snapped throughout its frame.

"Pull to the larboard," directed Peter Maus.

The bottom of the yawl grated on the shingles, and Peter Maus carefully stepped overboard. The water came up to his thighs. He took Rosy King in his arms and made for land.

A frightful whistling filled the night.

"Don't be afraid," said Peter Maus, "it's only the wind in the trees!"

He deposited Rosy King at the foot of a white path that ran back into the land; then, with great strides, he regained the long boat.

Rosy King, paralyzed with fright, stood still, without a whimper; but as the long boat receded farther and farther from shore, in order to regain the *Flying Dutchman* as quickly as possible, as is the law of dead souls, the cry of a child might have been heard. It was the cry of a dying soul, lamenting its fate.

"Good-bye, Rosy King," cried Peter Maus once more, from the long boat.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

Joseph Delteil

Joseph Delteil—born at Pieusse, near Carcassonne, in 1895—is essentially a writer who has come up from the provinces—when he first arrived in Paris, his comrades of that date will tell you, his

accent was almost unintelligible. After being a soldier, he was for a time an under-secretary in the naval service. His literary beginnings were conventional enough. Under the influence of Henri de Regnier and the Symbolists, he saw his first book, a volume of verse entitled Le Coeur grec, *given a prize by the French Academy. Two other verse volumes followed,* Le cygne androgyne *and* Ode à Limoux; *and then, in 1923, M. Delteil really began his career, as a Surréaliste, with a "novel" at once dazzling and disconcerting,* Sur le fleuve Amour. *At the back of this short piece were a number of "tales," of which "Iphigenia," given below, is one. This and the other tales, and* Sur le fleuve Amour *as well, show that the author, before the Surréalistes had effected an aggregation about* La Revolution Surréaliste, *in 1924, was evolving a super-realism of his own, one that owed much to his native provincial background and much to Rabelais, and one that had been inspired in part by Mac-Orlan's geographic influence; for Delteil was under some debt to the latter. There is in Delteil a rather curious admixture of the old and the new, and his outlook has been described as "Rabelais revised by Freud." Like Rabelais, he is a Catholic writer who is not afraid to "pull the beard of God," and it was his perduring Catholocism, as revealed in his* Jeanne d'Arc, *1925, that was to cause the Surréalistes to read him out of the party. In the meanwhile, Delteil had published his most typical book,* Cholera, *1923, which may be described as the epic of children discovering those excretory, reproductive and other mysteries that unite them to their larger playmate, the world.* Les cinq sens, *1924, was to set forth Delteil's doctrine of the primacy of sensation. In the same year, we shall find him, as an exponent of the Revolt against Reason, taking part with the Surréalistes in a manifestation against Anatole France.*

Since his "Jeanne d'Arc," *Delteil has published three other "Épopées":* Les Poilus (*a war book*); La Fayette; *and* Napoléon. *It is these biographies (with the exception of* Les Poilus), *if biographies they may be called, which have won him his trans-Atlantic audience, all of the books mentioned having been translated into English, while Delteil's earlier and more purely artistic work remains untranslated. In addition, Delteil has published three books which he groups as* Mystères: Discours aux oiseaux par Saint François d'Assise; Le Petit Jésus; *and* Don Juan. *His essays include:* Mes amours, *from which the* Aesthetes and Angels, *given below, is taken;* La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc; La Belle Corisande; Perpignan; Le mal de coeur; De Jean-Jacques Rousseau à Mistral; Les

chats de Paris; *and* La Belle Aude. *One should also mention, among his novels,* La Jonque de Porcelain.

One of Delteil's greatest gifts is his command of the rich, succulent speech of the French provinces; in this he is a master; he has even been seen as one of the great prose-writers of the language. His linguistic virtuosity comes out, for example, in certain passages of his Napoléon. *Some French critic has observed that an appreciation of Delteil is the mark of a peculiarly French intelligence; and Maurice Rouzaud says: "Rabelais . . . . Delteil . . . . two sides of the same medallion: health."*

IPHIGENIA

This decorative young Yankee who looks at Texas with eyes of relativity—look you, of Einstein—how slender he is, and frail, upon an American road. He wears upon his forehead a crown of true pallor, and he carries in his hand lilies which are out of place in this narrative. His little blond mustache corresponds to his feelings. His jacket comes from the house of Meldrum and Hill, at Austin. He has elegiac eyes and adorable pink cheeks, destined for some collection. Really, he is as beautiful as Iphigenia. At moments, he nibbles a reed-stalk, clipped in the pages of some pastoral. And at moments, he bites his nails like a nasty little boy. Then, he takes out his gold-circled spy-glass, breaks it, and tosses it into a dandelion meadow. Now, he takes out by its fob of austral cloth a huge civilized watch, with two polar needles, the one of which goes forward and the other backward, for the reason that its heart is out of step.

Certain glabrous men, every hundred years, bring him to the ceremonious crossway. It is the custom prescribed by the old men. The Red Knights will come to pick him up and conduct him to the Red Land. Here they are this very minute. They are four in number, mounted upon nude horses. They come straight from the four points of the compass. This might be the moment to paint them, I fancy, despite the twilight. But I have no brush in my hand. And what is more, I am somewhat worried over that young Yankee. He does not budge. Ah! I understand: he is chained down by his polished shoes to the sacrificial Stone.

The Red Knights dismount in a cinematographic ensemble. The youngest bares his bosom from which flows a black milk, and suckles

a child that has just been born under my pen. Might that be a symbol? I do not think so. Well-informed critics will professionally assert that Symbolism is dead. It is your turn, Henri de Regnier! When all is said, it is the Big Beard who has the better part. He approaches Iphigenia, kisses him on the trouser-seam, and unlaces his pretty shoes. Bravo! Iphigenia is free! Then, he takes him up in his arms and lays him across his saddle. The four Knights remount. They gallop all night long, over the prairie. Occasionally, a wolf crosses their ominous path, lean and with star-filled ears. Or it may be that, in some hacienda, a consumptive cock is crowing of death. In the distance flames some great shepherds' fire, but without the intervention, otherwise, of the least astronomy. And Iphigenia? Iphigenia is asleep. I shall tell you of him directly. For the moment, the Red Knights are passing through a city; it must be San Antonio. I have never seen it, but I am going to describe it just the same. It is white and fat as a mistress. It has taken out its public square, in the form of a ring, and has laid it down upon a center-table; it has put its Independence Monument back into a silk-lined lacquer-wood case; it has opened its main thoroughfare like a Bible, made its toilet at the temple, snuffed ten thousand candles, and fallen asleep on the shoulder of the Exposition Palace. Nothing could wake it, neither the scratching of my pen nor the passing of the Red Knights. They are galloping now, along the road to Mexico. Do not ask me, friend reader, where they are going. I should be compelled to pull their ears or interrogate Iphigenia. He is still asleep. That young Yankee certainly must have read the complete works of the Abbé Delille. The Big Beard suddenly looks at the time on his austral watch and hands me a transition. Iphigenia lets his legs dangle in the atmosphere. He is dreaming of Ursa Major and of General Washington. During this time, the Big Beard is unbuttoning his trousers; he lifts him up and tosses him into the firmament. He takes off his jacket, and with it, muffles the torso of a sick monkey which has sprung up in the nick of time at the end of my phrase. He undoes the immaculate collar, the polka-dot necktie, and puts it in his pocket. There is nothing left to do but unfasten his shirt. And there you are: Iphigenia is stark naked. I endeavor in vain to hide my face, the Big Beard utters an exclamation of love, the horses whinny, the sun comes up, the Red Skins leap up on all sides, and the cavalcade comes to a halt on the banks of the Rio Grande del Norte . . . .

Here we are, you tell me, with our imaginations running wild. Nothing of the sort! My imagination for me is a fat snail which

adheres with its soft belly to reality. It traipses all around the world, over women's ears and the pictures of the Masters, and sounds out the substance of things with its two flabby horns. Critic, you moron, you—you who look at a Rembrandt or a Maurice Denis over your big spectacles, at the regulation distance of eight paces, I would have you know that no man is capable of understanding a picture unless he has seven times passed his tongue over the dry and bitter paint, unless he has seven times heard, with his ear glued to the canvas, the tricentenary reverberation of the painter's brush. You say, one-dimension man, that the sun shines. But my snail's imagination knows that, at nine o'clock, upon a Texas hillock, it has the substantial taste of one of those violet-colored plums ripened in the northwind; that at three o'clock in the afternoon, in Chandernagore, it perfumes with putrid carnations the damaged souls of Congais; and that at midnight, from the Antipodes, it wafts me around the globe its subterranean essence of orchids. My imagination is, furthermore, a Japanese dowager with a Shelleyean monocle . . . . My imagination is also a scratcher of parchment and of old wives' tales. . . . . etc. . . . . etc. We left her on the banks of the Rio Grande del Norte. She is still there, in the company of the Red Skins. A Red Skin is an oval-shaped individual, exuberant and eloquent, of bister tint, with spicy manners, with big pins in his cravat and with feathers in his brain, and supplied according to longitude with aquatic accessories, with hair, and with a horse. One may cite, among the Red Skins: the Andalusians, the Cubans and the Iroquois. My Red Skins, as it happens, are red! So much the better! The landscape itself is red: with those big mountains artificially wrapped up in papier-mache. The Rio is rather a torrent; and Chateaubriand never saw it. And Iphigenia? Iphigenia is standing up, looking at an old Red Skin who is reading Petronius in the original. He is naked, and he endeavors to conceal his nakedness with his hair, which comes down as far as his temples. I am unable to see his hands; and he impresses me as being obviously less decorative than he was in the first act. Here we have an old man with a black face handing him a Red Skin manuscript. But Iphigenia knows nothing but English. Then another old man, clad in white wool, comes up and addresses him:

"You are beautiful, young Yankee! Your flesh is pink as that of watermelons, and your naval also is white as a celluloid cuff. I pray that the Red Skin god be satisfied with your bosom, your cheeks and your legs. And I sacrifice you, according to the rites, for the fulfillment of the fates' decrees!"

Having uttered these large and majestic words, the old man is silent. A new character brings in, upon a leather platter, the four-bladed ax. India-rubber torches are lighted here and there. A liturgic smoke ascends to the Red Skin heaven. Two young virgins put Iphigenia to bed upon the big flat stone, coated with wax and pig's fat. An impuberal lad, seizing the ax in his chubby hands, with a single stroke chops off Iphigenia's head.

Pray for him!

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Covici-Friede.)

FROM "CHOLERA"

ALICE

Alice has sulphur eyes and an oxygen dress. One day, as I was clawing her, she called me: Phosphate. So modern a nickname entranced me. I plucked eight days while the Stock Exchange List and chemistry lasted, and, O sweet revenge, I nicknamed her H_2SO_4.

Chemistry is the greatest contemporary discovery. It was Baudelaire who hit upon it. To contemplate a peach on a plate is physics; to eat it is chemistry. It is the New World. Baudelaire-Columbus. Hugo, Racine are physical. And what a physical specimen was Flaubert! Gustave Flaubert's phrase is a handsome automobile in a breakdown. Magnificent hood on a strong, durable chassis. Only, the motor gives out sometimes. I term motor that interior virtue of the phrase which causes 12 cylinders suddenly to burst into your brain and start breaking up the dishes. I likewise term motor that aptitude on the part of a piece of writing in combining with my brain to form a new body. H_2 is a motor with relation to O.

Often, this motor is a word. Understood, of course, that there are always, and always will be, noble words and serf words. *Merde* is a noble word. It is a corner-stone, a piece of marble. One could build a palace on it. Satisfaction is a low word. It is vague and slack. It has the colic.

. . . . .

Woman is a combination of oxygen, carbon, nitrogen and ammonia. Alice has pale cheeks. I fear a nitral insufficiency or an absence

of potassium. Her eyes over-abound in blue hydrogen. She is sitting beside me eating a slice of bread with currant jam: latitude 48° 27′ 52″ north, longitude 0° 5′ 42″ east. To the eyes of a Parisian, Paris has neither longitude, nor latitude, just as a navel has no legs; it is the center of the world. Insanity? In order to have sane ideas, one would have to consider things at a distance of 300,000 kilometers; an ant, Paris and Pierre MacOrlan possess exactly the same importance. The world is a little like surgeons; the latter are wise and melancholy, highly expert in sewing up an abdomen. But they are unable to conceive life without sprains, or that it might have been better for the abdomen never to have been unstitched. To begin to understand a thing, one must look at it from three points of view: 1) from the point of view of Adam; 2) from the point of view of the exact minute; 3) from the point of view of the year 164587. I control Rameses through my millionth grandson, and Jean Cocteau (the most intelligent man in France) through a milk-cow. The fine flower of Jacques Rivière's cerebral cells is identical with the cells of a hippopotamus' hoof.

Few men practice this gymnastic. The women are more apt at it, but less tractable. Their hips bring the scales down. Alice herself devotes a part of her day to current needs, circumscribed in space and time; she whitewashes her face with virginal milk, paints her eyelids with ceruse, adores crêpe de Chine and hugs the griffons.

CORNE

I have a superb forehead, a soul and a behind. How indigent, by comparison, is poor old Satan! I have everything that he has, plus a soul. André Gide has no soul, but he has a dozen animalcules where his soul ought to be. You can do without pipe-organs, when you have three hundred pianos. O André Gide, how many pianos have you put out of commission in the course of your life? Allah entrusted you with a white she-camel, and you water her in the moon, in the waters of the Maeander. Since then, she has black hair, Doric legs, a hazy eye, humps, and camel's milk.

At this period, I was being suckled by a few sensitive friends, juicy and divinely sick. Delicate young men are the most fitting embellishments for a terrestrial existence. Alas! Savanier is in the Savannas and Piguet has left for the Right. As for me a little blackbird tells me big words between my third and fourth rib, then drops some guano on my heart.

I am physical, unbearable and unhealthy. Imagine the second pyramid at Honolulu! She, she is named Corne. Not precisely lily-like, but of those who become smitten with Charles-Louis-Philippe, who carry off little yellow birdies, who eat delicate filth, and who cough to the left!

. . . . . .

I made her acquaintance the 5th of April, at eight o'clock in the morning, under the weeping willow. Women have a silken logic; they are willing for you to undress them, providing you dress them. That was not the case with her! She wore a simple cotton chemisette and a Marianne cap. She was red and blue like a white republican. She was singing:

I have delicate bronchial tubes,
A heart of cat or Shah, ...
An Asia in my sense of smell,
A context between each paw.

It may be seen from this that her style was sly and profligate, and she swallowed her words something awful. We immediately came to an understanding upon one point: love. There have been many definitions of love, all of them false. Corne found the only efficacious one: "a flea upon a hippopotamus." Something that eats you minutely. Other times, she would say: "a plaything of genius." For we reckoned that the only ones who knew love were Hòmer, Caesar, Duguesclin and Victor Hugo. She wept and swooned when she learned that the corner-grocery-man's name was Napoleon.

We made love in an original fashion. She assumed a complicated posture on the banks of the slim canal in the park. We called that canal the Rubicon. I was Caesar on the other bank. We would bend down together over the water. And occasionally, if the wind was in the right direction, I was permitted to kiss upon the lips Corne's elliptic and mellifluous image.

. . . . . .

This aqueous contemplation hardened me. I soon became livid and heretical. There are, outside of the rainbow, certain subtle colors which only the most lucid among the blind discern. Eunuchs have the most impalpable knowledge of pleasure. I thought seriously of having myself gelded. I had five senses, and I was avid for quinquennial sensations and for certain rare admixtures of sensations. I

fasted forty-eight hours in order that I might know at last the Biblical taste of bread. I adored being sick, and afterwards, what a vinous drunkenness, that of convalescence. But from playing thus familiarly with my instinct, I broke it.

Corne made me rice-patties and admired me. Did I like the patties better? We ate them on the banks of the factitious canal, and on romantic days, we added carobs, mussels and hard-boiled eggs. All this gave us a certain constipation.

We washed it away with melancholy. That is an ointment that is retailed in poems, in autumns, and in garlic-cloves. We would set out at dawn for the park. We would embrace in passing the young trees, the blond accacias, the brown cypresses. Times, we would stop under the weeping willow, and Corne would read in a loud voice a page of Chateaubriand or of the comtesse de Noailles. That touched even the willow. Then we wept.

. . . . .

Corne, O precocious and incommensurable young lady! Your name made of two halves of a banana is to be sucked at both ends. Your charms are such as deliciously corrode hearts and horns, and even find their way into the intestines. Do not hold it against me if I cheat; it is your own game! Your image burns the water of the so slim canal where I dip my swooning pen. I watch the family alliances which you make, down there in those liquid depths, with the algae and the frogs. Your mouth feeds on the plump sand at the bottom of the canal. You smile behind your hair.

Since I am trembling altogether too much, she lifts her head, and the canal is no longer anything but water, beautiful and empty. Caesar does his commentaries.

Then, little by little, she once more bends down her brow, and I see her face limpidly gushing from the roots on the left bank. I am standing on the right bank, and my greedy eyes watch her slowly budding there, with her chin which is a seed and her cheeks which are a pair of folioles. Once more, two faces come close at the surface of the Rubicon. Already, I have reached her blue mouth. The four joined lips puff out in the water in a sort of sorcery. I feel my heart beating; it is drowning.

And then, suddenly, thanks to some sentimental decoy, I slip. I let out a cry: Caesar! and I cross the Rubicon.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

AESTHETES AND ANGELS

There are two beings, the Aesthete and the Angel.

The one, a reasonable being, has his seat in the brain; the other in the heart.

There is no subordinating the one to the other. Water-tight compartments.

Let us open, from time to time, the Dictionary. I read:

"AESTHETICS: *Science* which treats of the beautiful in general."

Admirable definition! Aesthetics is a science! Aesthetics equals: commentator, critic. Matter of intelligence, of reasoning. Faculty of persuading, of explaining. Professorship.

Art demonstrates nothing.

Art is the Angel's business. Here, there is no longer any arrangement, but creation. It is a question, not of dressing a child, but of bringing it into the world.

A work of art has this in common with an egg, that it eludes all premeditation. It is an event in nature. Spontaneous birth. The man of genius and the hen lay, not in accordance with a voluntary rhythm, but when they have an egg to deposit.

The man of genius makes masterpieces as the hen lays eggs. He deserves neither felicitations nor banknotes. He is but the instrument.

A horse does not lay eggs. An aesthete does not lay works of art. There is, here, a question of breed, of kind.

Cocteau is an aesthete. Rimbaud, whom I put some leagues above Oscar Wilde, is an angel (or, if you like, a hen).

The aesthete is the descendant of the scholastic. The angel has no ascension.

Satan is an aesthete. God is an angel.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

1924: A CRISIS

(February, 1924)

The year 1924 is an important one, if not *the* important one, of the after-War decade in literary France. It marks what might be called the *turn* of the decade. It is likewise the point of crystallization of the period. The immediate reaction to war-madness, beginning before the end of the War, in 1916, was, as we have seen, Dada, with its revolt against literature and aesthetics. Dada, which proclaimed itself dead, was short-lived; we have already witnessed its obsequies. Then came the Jules-Verne-imaginative journey interlude, represented by such writers as MacOrlan and Giraudoux, while the Dada influence was being reflected in poetry such as that of Paul Morand. We have seen in Delteil the transition from the Imaginative Journey to Super-realism, the revolt against aestheticism (a lingering trace in Delteil's "Aesthetes and Angels") tending more and more to become a *Revolt against Reason*. By 1924, we find a distinct tendency on the part of young writers away from reason and toward the supernatural. (*Cf. Surréalisme* with M. Huysmans' *Supranaturisme*.) There is, in short, a distinct backward (?) step into the mid-current of nineteenth-century Romanticism. Of these new straws —they were something more than straws—in the wind, both the older and younger writers and critics, whatever their sympathies or affiliations, were painfully conscious. This consciousness came to a head in the February 1, 1924, number of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. To that number, M. Marcel Arland, who had not then achieved the prize-winning distinction which has since come to him, contributed an article which presents the point of view of the young writer of the day who was not aligned with the advance-guard movements, and who was more than a little bewildered, as well as alarmed and grieved by it all. M. Arland believed he had discovered a new *mal du siècle*. In the same number, M. Jacques Rivière, now dead, took occasion to reply to M. Arland, employing the latter's article as a document. M. Rivière in his turn discovered what he felt as a crisis in the concept of literature. He is inclined to discredit M. Arland's discovery, and to find the seat of the trouble in a nineteenth-century-Romantic confusion of the literary and sacerdotal functions. The two articles in question, only very slightly and immateri-

ally abridged are herewith given, not only for their interest as pieces of writing, but for their historic value. They are excellent examples of French criticism, and of the aliveness of the French mind.

Marcel Arland

Marcel Arland is now known as the winner of the Goncourt Prize, a year or two ago, for his war novel, L'Ordre. *He has been the editor of a number of reviews, and his affiliations would seem to be with Gide on the one hand and Mauriac on the other. His novels and short stories include:* Étienne; Monique; Terres étrangères; Les Ames en peine. *Essays:* La Route Obscure *(interesting for the light it casts upon the younger generation)* ; Étapes, Ou le Coeur se partage.

CONCERNING A NEW MAL DU SIÈCLE

(Abridged)

The generations oscillate between two perils: order and anarchy. A twofold mirror; if I turn toward one or toward the other, it gives me back my own vague image. But our passion for creation, for self-affirmation, results in the mental suppression of the half of life; the victors are one-eyed. It is not wisdom that we are seeking; we merely follow our hidden instincts, and are swayed by a few fashions, circumstances and, it may be, laws that determine the rhythm of the ages.

It would appear that all civilizations tend to converge toward an ideal point, which is no sooner attained than it is surpassed. What name are we to give to this point, which represents the point of balance of the characteristics of a race, that single instant when all the self-questing, formerly self-shackled forces meet and combine in an admirable spectacle born of the collaboration of God, man and chance? Barely has this instant been brought about, when a civilization starts swerving away with diverging energies. It is then that the sense of the words: order and anarchy, undergoes a change. The only order that a thinking man knows is that which existed yesterday; and anarchy is that order which one wishes to set up. Prior to that instant of the harmonious balancing of the various talents of

a people, tending towards anarchy means tending toward that instant; or, if you prefer, progress means tending away from that instant. Not that a people may ever hope to attain a period like the one they have left behind them; but a civilization does undergo modifications; and when a nation is headed for ruin, it is in the work of art that the principles underlying its ruination will become apparent, and the work of art will be the most perfect expression of those principles. Above all, I believe that if the genius of an entire country finds its affirmation in that period of equilibrium of which we have spoken, it is in the troubled eras, eras of decadence or of resurrection, that the genius of individuals is most clearly revealed. Such is the first explanation that is to be given for those experiments on the part of the generation immediately following the War, of which the most interesting, and almost the unique, expression was the Dada movement.

The Dada movement was never the expression of a people, but it was tolerated and, undoubtedly, caused by the state of civilization of that people. It may be that it came a little too soon. Such movements as this, provoked by individuals in place of being the manifestation of a prevailing condition, precede and tend to bring on that condition. But the condition must exist, and if we feel any astonishment, it must be at the fact that the condition is not more widespread than it is. It may be well to recall the state of mind along about 1914.

. . . . .

This atmosphere obviously must have seemed stifling to the young, who were just attaining to a consciousness of themselves and of that world in which they were called upon to live. In the course of those years, when every one from M. Anatole France down to journalists and newspaper-readers was witty, graceful and ironic, when every one could turn out a faultless sonnet, quote Renan, Ibsen or Nietzsche, and name the ten advance-guard schools,—it was in the course of those years that a transvaluation of values became a necessity. The unbelievable silliness of the war literature rendered it still more imperative. It was natural to parade one's coarseness in the midst of so many simpering graces, one's violence amid so much sweetness, and one's illogicality in the presence of so much nicety. (What I say is: natural to parade.)

During the same years, moreover, there were certain more than usually important works that saw the light; and these, unknown to

the public at large, had something to do with the birth of Dada. The *sine matre prolem* does not apply here. It would be easy enough to show how the worship of emotion was to end, not illogically, in incoherence, and then in silence; how the worship of the intelligence, carried to its extreme limits, led to the negation of the intelligence itself, or rather, to a humorous manifestation on the part of the intelligence; and how, finally, a theory of destruction had come to be formulated, all the more dangerous for the reason that it assumed the guise of mysticism.

I am not concerned here with a history of the Dada movement, and shall not go into the causes of that movement, which were many in number. (And then, too, I do not care to take all the responsibility away from individuals.) Among the reasons which have been given is the following, which is a little too simple: the fact that one generation only asserts itself by going further than the generation preceding; but then, at once comes the thought: supposing we were to go the limit in daring? The limit in daring is not destruction, but abstention; a violence greater than saying No is to be found in silence; and the real despair lies in acceptance, not in suicide. But at twenty, it is possible, one commits suicide rather than accept. Acceptance forbids the work of art. And whatever may be the contempt of this generation for art, it was a generation of artists, and the energy which was in those artists found a translation in the form of negation, an outlet in the form of silence being out of the question.

If, as is asserted, Dada was really dead, its brief life would be to me a cause for great astonishment. Those easy-going individuals who saw in it only the to-be-expected manifestation of a generation swinging into action would then be all too readily justified. Each generation, no doubt, does first set about destroying, in order that it may later rebuild in its own fashion, or, as it believes, build. But it was quite a different show put on a few years ago by these fellows who destroyed for the sake of destroying, and for the reason that destruction impressed them as being the only dignified activity. It was, indeed, so capital a show that I am inclined to look upon it as an episode, rather than as a whole. It was not a beginning; everything had been destroyed long before, in morals as in literature; but the thing to be done was to dance a bacchanale amid the shattered goblets. Nor was it, any more, an end, following which all was to be born again, with a new and smiling countenance. The essence of Dada persists; it may not go clad in the blustering garb it wore of

old, but at least, it still possesses an equal degree of virulence and of power,—an even greater degree, it may be, now that it has become more tranquil of mien.

That which goes to explain the brevity of this movement is, precisely, its violence. It is quite true that, from the day the word was discovered: Dada, there remained almost no further conquests to make, by which I mean, external conquests. But after affirmation, persuasion remains to be accomplished. It is a slower, more secret process. Real destruction is affected by regular doses, as in the case of those poisons which are neutralized by a too immediate absorption.

One of the things which shows most clearly how premature the Dada movement was is the small number of converts it made, whereas, a few years later, it would have won over the best minds that we have. Born in France (I chauvinistically remark), (1) it was cradled in Central Europe and came back to France to spend its prime; and it was never lacking, as it happened, in novelty, arrogance or snobism. The only thing it lacked was being a school, that is to say, having a window open somewhere toward a new horizon—or merely, if you like: a new window open upon the same horizon. For when it tried to utter any other word than Dada, it ceased to exist as a movement, and there remained only M. X——, former Dadaist, author of ——.

But following the disappearance of Dada, that intellectual commotion of which it was only one of the phases continued. The premature hatching of this manifestation put its triumph off for a number of years. In the presence of its assumed death, academic prizes and symposiums on the tendencies of modern youth went on. For some time now, there is no one of any culture who has not identified himself with Rimbaud; they will be doing it tomorrow with Lautréamont or with M. Raymond Roussel. This is the time now when you hear them talking of the good old Dada movement, so likeable a movement after all. This is likewise the moment for the dead to be reincarnated, it is not for me to say under what form, and to give its new friends and more than one of its former followers, who will fail to recognize it, a most amusing trip-up.

. . . . .

If one considers the present state of young literature, one finds it difficult enough to form a lucid estimate of the generation following

[1] I am betrayed by words; what I mean to say is: conceived in France; but according to law, the rightful father is the one who bestows his name. (M. Arland's Note.)

Dada and of its personal stock-in-trade. Certain ones instinctively turn to the advance-guard of yesterday and would begin all over again the heroic age. Confronting them are a number of charming young people, well informed, witty, masters of their art at twenty, who vie with one another in translating their own elegant minds into literature.

Amid the contemporary confusion and nonchalance, it was easy to raise one's voice and announce the discovery of new worlds; a public is always to be found, proud and happy to applaud and understand. *Petits-maîtres* were not lacking; each discovered something original and proclaimed it the perfect article, like those globes in suburban gardens, where one may, without fatigue, make the tour of the world and its passions.

Fantasy, gesture, attitudes are the three principal characteristics of that literature which flourished yesterday, and which would still like to carry on today. One has been pleased to believe that the inmost secrets of the soul and of beauty were to be found in those measured frivolities, in those word-games and games of the heart, as delicate and pretty as a rose (the rose, emblem of a whole literature), with which, for a score of years, we have been flooded, under the pretext that they were fantasy. For all the questions of life, the answer was a pirouette; everything lay in pirouetting gracefully; after which, one bowed with a smile to the reader.

Gestures hold a peril quite as odious. However lacking in strength and inclination I personally may have been, when it came to essaying those of Dada, I still like to see others indulge in them, and lend my approbation. But following the disappearance of these movement, gestures have become vain, as certain recent experiences have demonstrated. No gesture is the expression of an individual; deliriums leave us a little cold, and gestures seem a trifle too Pythian, when a season has gone by over the head of the prodigal son. Those cutting airs, those laborious grimaces, those literary *pétarades*—I am unable to conceal my boredom. The gun was not loaded, and I do not jump any more, at the second detonation. The conflagration of a well brought up soul ought to be confined to the interior; few spectacles are as moving as a violent emotion under a placid countenance. No doubt, it is possible to make a gesture with a smile. I am too fond of mystifications not to be secretly attracted toward them, even when they are of mediocre quality. But mystification on parade,—I cannot help seeing how far it is, and how different it is, from nature.

But the greatest peril lies in the false prophets. They have laid down rules to guide us in our love of things and of people, for cultivating egoism, by way of freeing us from all rules. They have known that painful moment of adolescence when one has as much need of a principle as of a mistress; and they also know that an assured tone and two or three witticisms are sufficient to enlist an uncertainty. In our quest of attitudes and doctrines, we have run through all the fairs of the world; and an arrogant manner, an artful smile, some slight abnormality of body or of soul, has been enough to touch our hearts. Our need of voluntary enlistment is such that a *succédané* of d'Annunzio and the German junkers, preaching by example the cult of football as the sole savior of the world, would find today fervent followers.[2]

It is in getting away from this triple lie, of attitudes, of gestures and of fantasy, that the self-questing literature of today acquires a chance, not perhaps of immediate success, but of life. A lie is not a hateful thing in itself, far from it; it is only odious because one ends by believing it. Towards an absolute sincerity: that undoubtedly is the direction in which those four or five individuals are headed who are sufficient to represent if not to express a generation. For it is not so much a generation as individuals who may interest us now. Between these individuals, it is possible to make out certain bonds; but not the bonds of a school; for a multiplicity of schools would of necessity lead to their disappearance, or to the disappearance of their importance; the real worker of today is a solitary. The word

[2] M. Arland has the following note:

Tired of one idea, we take up another. The remarkable thing is that we are always taking up another. On the Hoang-Ho, the fishermen make use of the cormorant; like the pelican, it is a long-legged bird, with a big neck and bill. About its neck they slip a ring that almost strangles it. The boat is on the river, and a fish goes by; the cormorant dives and gobbles it up, but does not swallow it, for the ring prevents that. They open the cormorant's mouth, take out the fish, and then the performance begins all over again.— "But," I remark, "doesn't the cormorant ever get tired of fishing like that with nothing to gain?"—"Ho! the cormorant is so stupid."—"So stupid?"— "Ho! you wouldn't believe how stupid he is."

In the end, however, there comes a time when one rebels. Doctrines? What to do with them? We—doctrines! Could a whole-souled man be subject to a doctrine? It is then that one creates a doctrine of revolt, of independence, of anti-doctrination. A boat somewhere: "See how free I am."— "Little simpleton! and what about the pilot at the helm?" . . . A gust of wind wipes out pilot and helm, drives the boat to another shore— "Look, I really am free this time."

work may provoke a smile; for never before, the truth is, has there been so much contempt for art; and I am not referring merely to the processes of art, but to their result, which used to be termed beauty; a contempt for words, for processes of investigation and of knowledge, for the intelligence as for the sensitivity, for the personality.

Previous to all literature, there is one object that interests me first of all: myself. This is an object which I seek to come near by the purest means that I am able to find. Literature, which is the best of those means, no longer intrigues us, except in its relation to ourselves, and according to the influence which it may have upon us. It thus at once is elevated and debased; for if, on the one hand, the objective that we set ourselves is the noblest that there is, it none the less becomes itself a means: means of knowing ourselves, means of trying ourselves out (certain literary experiences are more dangerous than real ones). There are some books of which it may be said that they are like that Hebrew army which surrounded the walls of Jericho. I have little faith in blowings of the trumpet, little faith even in words; but if the walls of Jericho fell, it was in a manner by persuasion; and I shall not succeed in revealing myself until I have seven times called aloud in the voice of anguish.

Morality, then, shall be our first concern. I am unable to conceive a literature without ethics. No doctrine can satisfy us, but the absence of doctrine is a torture for us. It is possible the day will come when such torments will seem naïve, and one will be astonished at his fondness for morose delectation, for that masochism, that unrest which lead us to very special exertions. Good and evil, this distinction which has in it an element of the comic is only possible for the reason that centuries of social and religious life have engraved the words within us; it is this distinction which provides the direction for the majority of those adventures in which certain minds of today are trying out their powers. For if, after Dada, the desire to scandalize may seem vulgar, one still retains at least a taste for his individual scandal. Action and gesture are too frequently confused; one may be the proof of itself, although never an accurate proof; the other is swagger and simple ostentation; there is such a thing as unmotivated actions; a gesture is always an affirmation. It is, accordingly, not against action that we are to rebel; however great may be the contempt in which it is commonly held, and however unsuited to action the better minds among us may be, a disdain of action is a cowardice, too easy a way out. It is all very well for

Rancé to speak of renunciation, after having possessed all those riches and all that human glory; he may, if he likes; but we are all too inclined to identify ourselves with our favorite heroes.

All questions come back to one problem, that of God. Something has been said of a new *mal du siècle;* a vogue has been given to new words and new feelings; any reader of the advance-guard reviews is conscious first of a certain fervor, and then of a certain restlessness. I greatly regret that popularization of words which makes necessary unfortunate neologisms. But the notaries who, a hundred years ago, believed that they were Werther or René in person have not caused us to doubt of Goethe or Chauteaubriand. And however great may be our repugnance for the too emphatic phrase, *mal du siècle,* we must make use of it, if we are to credit our own anguish. God, the everlasting torment of men, whether they seek to create or to destroy him: the work of a Racine is to be explained by His permanent presence; that of Rousseau by the quest of Him; that of Stendahl by the effort of the passions to conceal His absence. But a mind in which this destruction of God is an accomplished fact, in which the problem of divinity is no longer debated,—with what is it to fill the ever-yawning void left by the ages and the instincts? The absence of God is the *reductio ad absurdum* of all morality. Can political forms, humanitarian or economic questions ever replace in us the ancient substructure? Until we grow accustomed to this novel state of affairs, everything will seem derisive to us, and ourselves most of all. Minds without an axis, building for the sake of convenience or from practical reasons parapets in which we do not place the least confidence, we find ourselves condemned to incessant *occupations;* occupations, and nothing more; each one gives himself to these pursuits in accordance with his sensitivity, his degree of boredom or fatigue: there is travel, marriage, the passions; to be rich, to be Lauzun, to be the deputé des Halles; there are certain perilous experiments, certain anomalies, certain crimes; there is also literature.

For it is not within a few years' time that man will be able to console himself for the loss of God. But with what ardor they have attempted to make up for this loss: mysticisms of beauty, of mankind, and of the individual: unassuaged passions, swerving instincts —of it all, nothing is left but lassitude and discouragement, a burning ardor with nothing to feed on, and which consumes its own hearth. The contemporaneity of Dostoievski is a very clear indication; never in France has one felt nearer to certain characters in the

Possessed or in the *Brothers Karamazov;* the anguish in which these characters live, the tragic import of their gestures, and the evangelic mysticism which the novelist upon occasion shares with his characters, are all qualities which may be found in certain of our contemporaries. Certain of these, in spite of themselves, in spite of their age and the little hope they have, being still conscious within themselves of the presence, not of the idol, but of the altar, have attempted to retrieve what they had lost by exaggeratedly keeping up the gestures of adoration—in the expectation of a miracle. The miracle does not impress me as being impossible, any more than that definitive gesture by means of which one might be able to come upon an objective for all one's questings and hesitations. But between miracle and suicide, and until such a time as resignation is achieved, there is room for a highly individual literature, a dangerous one to be sure, and sometimes lyric and exceptional. But after all the futile jugglings, all the graces and grimaces, all the strivings for originality, all the exoticism and cinematographic literature that we have had, may it not be that the hour at last has struck for a new simplicity, that of those periods when, without any gesticulation, man leans over his own drama, with his five miserable senses, with the intoxicating misery of thinking and of being moved. It is not a return to classicism that seems to me desirable,—but, amid the disorder and the tumult of minds, a new harmony. Thus, this literature would be at once a phase, a factor and a reflection of a commotion that is far and away beyond us, and which is leading a whole civilization to ruin or to resurrection.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of the *Nouvelle Revue Française.*)

Jacques Rivière

Jacques Rivière, a distinguished critic of a slightly older school, died a few years ago. He was known as a contributor to La Nouvelle Revue Française *and other magazines. Perhaps, the most interesting work that he has left behind him is his correspondence, which has been published by the Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française.*

A CRISIS IN THE CONCEPT OF LITERATURE

(*Abridged*)

The foregoing article [3] gives us the opinion of a very young writer on the generation immediately preceding him, the members of which today [4] are from twenty-seven to thirty years of age. I ask permission, of the author and of my readers, to make a brief study of his article, as of a document which I might have come upon by chance, like a bottle snatched from that vague and problematic sea, those as yet unexpressed ages which are in process of formation in front of our eyes.

One thing that strikes me first in this confession is that literature is there conceived as a subordinate activity. Subordinate to what? I do not care to press M. Arland for an answer. I note, however: "Previous to all literature, there is one object that interests me first of all: myself. This is an object which I seek to come near by the purest means that I can find. Literature, which is the best of those means, no longer intrigues us, except in its relation to ourselves, and according to the influence which it may have upon us."

This declaration becomes important, if one views it in connection with two or three of the following facts:

It was very clearly by antiphrasis that the editors entitled *Littérature* that review which, shortly after its foundation, was to come to serve as the organ of the Dada movement. And it will be recalled that the first question which these youngsters put to their elders was an ironic: Why do you write?

[3] M. Arland's.
[4] 1924.

If one inquires of Paul Valéry what the significance of his activity is, he will at once bestir himself to show its transcendency in relation to literature, the written form which he gives to his thought being, for the latter, but an accident.

If one dives into the work of Marcel Proust, one sees at once that it is the result of a purely philosophic, even scientific design.

I might go on and cite other facts, but these impress me as being sufficient to bring to light a general tendency,—one which, if we are to credit M. Arland, would appear to be animating or affecting (I leave to the reader the choice of words) even the youngest generation,—a tendency to regard writing as nothing more than a last-shift, or, at any rate, a tendency to confer upon writing, literary creation, a set of extrinsic objectives. No era, it may be, despite what certain short-sighted critics may think, has ever been so far as our own from the practice of "art for art's sake." It even would appear that we are now confronting an extremely grave crisis in the very concept of literature.

. . . . . .

What are the reasons?

It may be that M. Arland does not see them altogether clearly. I am struck, first of all, by the importance which he ventures to attribute to the disappearance of God, in connection with that unrest which is to be found among our young writers: "God, the everlasting torment of men, whether they seek to create or to destroy him."

It seems to me impossible to understand what is going on about us with reference to the idea of literature, unless one takes account of the extent to which, since Romanticism, this idea has been permeated, or contaminated, by the idea of religion. If the problem of the possibility and the limits of literature assumes so tragic a character today, it is, in my opinion, for the reason that it has usurped the place and form of the religious problem.

In the seventeenth century, I said in an interview which was published in the *Journal du Peuple*,[5] if the idea had occurred to anyone of asking Molière or Racine why they wrote, the answer would undoubtedly have been: "To amuse the good folks." It was only with the advent of Romanticism that the literary act began to be conceived of as a sort of approach to the absolute, and its resultant as a revelation; literature at that moment entered into religion's heritage and proceeded to pattern itself after the displaced heir; the

[5] April 21, 1923.

writer has become a priest, and all his gestures tend simply to the evocation, in that sacred host which is the work of art, of the "real presence." The whole of nineteenth-century literature is one vast incantation, looking to this miracle.

As I see it, this conception is today undergoing a crisis. The young today continue to be tormented by a need of the absolute, a need bequeathed them by the era preceding; but they are conscious, at the same time, of a radical impotence, when it comes to producing something in which they have faith, which might impress them as being something beyond themselves, something in the nature of a creation comparable to the creations of God. Hence that furious dogmatic scepticism which one encounters in some of them; hence that ironic question to their elders: "Why do you write? Can it be that you do not see that there is nothing real, certain, positive, demonstrable except nothingness? Can you not see that it is nothingness which lies in wait for all of what you call your output, and which barely leaves you time to cull a few derisive laurels before swallowing you up?" And the more logical among them make up their minds, so far as they are concerned, to renounce a species of activity which, as they feel, can only lead to hypocrisy or deception.

In these few lines, I thus summed up, possibly in too simplified a fashion, the state of mind of those young writers to whom I was alluding, namely, the members of the former Dada group. Their attitude, I realize today, is more complex, their intentions more contradictory. They are not so consistent in their scepticism as I had supposed; or rather, it is not a case with them of a choice between scepticism and faith; faith, a shameful sort of faith, persists in them; they continue to attribute to themselves supernatural powers; they remain deeply imbued with Rimbaud's vow; like him, they await the nameless visitor: "Flowering mildness of the stars, and of the heavens, and of the rest, descend the face of the hill, like a basket, against our face, and make the abyss flowering and blue underneath."

They are vaguely aware of an ever-increasing difficulty in the summoning of "spirits" (and their bad humor comes from this), but they do not give it up on that account. On the contrary, they multiply their gestures and their incantations, and have recourse to talismans that are more and more fantastic and material.

I have previously endeavored, in an article which appeared in these pages,[6] to demonstrate at length that this effort on their part, a prolongation of nineteenth-century effort, tended to the pure in-

[6] *Reconnaissance à Dada, Nouvelle Revue Française,* August 1, 1920.

carnation of their personalities, to the creation, for their own use, of a sort of "glorified body," a tendency which must inevitably lead them beyond the bounds of literature. But what I failed to notice sufficiently was, how much of objectivist and even metaphysical ambition was mingled with these subjective ends. As a matter of fact, while "informing themselves," in the philosophical sense of the word, they are laboring ever,—more zealously and stubbornly, even, than their elders,—at the task of evoking those presences which are unknown to us, and of capturing those larvae which roam about the confines of the mind.

And this effort, similarly, leads them to despise, and to exceed the bounds of, literature.

For supposing that one believes in the possibility of poetic "materializations." Let us postulate this new spiritualism. Everything undergoes a change of value. There is no longer any fiction, no longer any modeling with the hands, no longer any imitation; there is no longer a question of achieving a likeness. The poet is unable to see himself any longer as a more or less clever craftsman, engaged in hewing out a little statue. The very idea of beauty disappears utterly. . . .[7]

We shall call poetry an ensemble of phenomena *x,* to which certain brains are subject in the same manner in which a medium may experience supernatural adventures. The notation of these phenomena ought to be assimilable on every head to the minutes of spiritistic seances. So far as that is concerned, did not André Breton and his friends at one time practice hypnotism as the direct and solitary source of inspiration? By the stress, moreover, which they lay upon the work of non-professional writers, of the unconscious or of imbeciles, they appear to be telling us that their only religion is that of the mystic event, and that they are constantly waiting for a poetic Pentecost.

A picture of Giorgio de Chirico, in which one sees a marble woman lying upon a wooden chest, with a railway in the background, the whole painted in colors borrowed from the builder's art, can have no aesthetic signification, properly speaking, but communicates to the soul an ambiguous emotion, which comes from not knowing whether it is engaged in creating a world or in receiving a revelation.

An "abstract photograph" of Man Ray, in which a compass, a

[7] Author's asterisks.

pencil, a square are to be seen waltzing into a fabulous light, which falls upon and transfigures their eddying motions,—all this is merely a means, having nothing to do with aesthetic appreciation, of causing the mind to deviate in the direction of some *noumenon.*

In the matter of writing (I expressly avoid the words *literary* or *poetic*), I should be the last to deny the mysterious efficacy of certain verbal agglomerations. There is the applied image, which serves to double an idea, to sharpen the senses along the same path as the intelligence. There is that which the *"littérateur"* employs. But there is also the pure image, of which the poet makes use: a group of words corresponding solely to a thing seen, with nothing to indicate the relation between this and our vision as a whole, with nothing to contribute to its intellectual integration on our part. The whole of post-Dadaist poetry is a conglomeration of these images, in which, armed with our intuition as with a magnifying glass, we may, if luck is with us, come to see the stirrings of the stars and of angels in their incalculably remote spheres. I am not denying that certain rays defying analysis have been captured. In my more optimistic moments, I have even been led to believe that man, in these latter times, has made certain improvements upon Paradise.

. . . . .

If one must generalize, I should say that this "modern spirit," this "super-realism" of which so much is heard, consists, in all the arts:

1. *in intention,* in drawing directly, without any rebound from the *ego,* in connection with written, plastic or sonorous material, upon those unknown currents that surround us;

2. *in practice,* in breaking up all the forms of speech, all the veinings of the medium, all those constructive elements which seem likely to lead to canalization, or likely to give to "things" (whatever is to be understood by this word) the outlines of a likeness.

Art (if even this word may still be preserved) becomes thus a completely dehumanized activity, a super-sensory function, so to speak, a sort of creative astronomy. And it may be that not only the idea of literature, but that of painting, of music, and perhaps even of poetry are to disappear before the idea, if one chooses to call it such, of *catalysis,* the creative *ego* being but a body which, by its mere presence, and without any chemical participation, brings into play the affinities of two foreign bodies.

. . . . .

My only object in these brief notes, of the disorderly arrangement of which I am unpleasantly conscious, is to define a tendency which has been imperfectly set forth in my preceding articles. My object is not to judge. I am more than willing to admit that, in music at least, thanks to Strawinsky (the question is as to whether one is to take his personality as an abstraction, or whether another medium would have obtained the same results), this tendency has led to the production of masterpieces.

Nevertheless, I beg leave to align myself with another effort, which a number of respected minds are making at this moment, and which, less metaphysical in intention, impresses me as being more fertile in results. There is in this latter tendency nothing of a reactionary nature; I even see in it a profound novelty.

I heartily admit that it is out of the question for a living work of art to be born today except of a discovery, and that it can only consist in that discovery. That phase of the concept of literature which called for a happy arrangement of words and letters around a feeling or an idea that were already known, and which had already been mastered by the one writing, is, without question, hopelessly out-of-date.

But I may have my nebula, also. I claim the right:

1. not to delude myself concerning its location, the right of knowing that it exists only in myself;

2. of treating it with other means than catalysis, of attacking it with my intelligence, and of translating the substantial elements which I recognize in it, or which I may, little by little, determine, into social language, such as any mind may comprehend without any contingency.

There is no doubt that I shall thus arrive at something other than poetry, at literature, perhaps. And I further ask the right not to feel disgraced thereby.

This is a point upon which I feel that I am decidedly more advanced than those young writers who are so fond of insulting me. It is my impression that they are still floundering about in a deplorably romantic conception of their function. If writing appears to them a laughable business, it is because they still believe that it is very important. They are undermined by pride—and by the idea, always, that the writer has no reason for being, unless he works miracles. They see him always at the altar; whatever happens, God, in his hands, must be made flesh. And if the host remains uninhabited, the priest obviously is no more than a grotesque.

That perpetual vacillation between living and dying with which they are animated, that dilemma of genius or suicide, on the horns of which they flounder, are the consequence of an undue mingling, on the part of the Romantics, of the sacred with the literary function.

I do not believe in that new *"mal du siècle"* which M. Arland denounces. It is the old one still, it is the last century's ache. It is a long time now that we have been suffering from it; and so, we ought to be well enough acquainted with it by now to be able to overcome it by a strong effort of will.

A strong effort of will, erecting in the mind a strong humility.

. . . . .

I am not finding fault with *poésie pure;* I seek only to limit its domain; I would prevent it from devouring the whole of literature and throwing it out of pace. There is, in spite of everything, in the mass of present-day writing, an enormous dose of the *improbable,* which we must strive to reduce. That which comes without having passed through the intelligence may surpass the intelligence, but it may also be nothing at all. We have before us, we must not forget, the terrible example of Symbolist poetry, four-fifths of which has ceased to have any meaning whatsoever for the imagination.

I should like to see always a small group whose function it is to assure our communication with the absolute. But I would not permit them to terrorize us, and to impose their own chosen function upon us as the only admissible and venerable one.

It is not impossible that, in what I have said above, I have defined in too narrow and unsatisfactory a fashion the meaning of literary tendencies, as a whole. It may be that there would be a peril even in going back, purely and simply, to the Proustian *recherche*; this method also, as I have noted in the beginning, would tend, in another manner, to bring us outside of literature. M. Arland is quite right in observing that human torment should not escape the writer's attention: his strivings; his struggle against fate; with other beings; his respiratory sedulousness; his defeats, but his triumphs also; faith; love; devotion; life in short; that endurance of his—all these constitute an eternal object which that eternal activity known as literature could and should take in.

But the essential, even though it be but provisory and by way of regaining a lost equilibrium, would appear to me to be to hold within rigid bounds our conception of the possibilities of writing, and not to mistake the suggestions of our subconscious for an exter-

nal revelation, nor to subordinate the literary process to transcendental ends.

There is a vast deal of grandeur in a very little truth.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the *Nouvelle Revue Française.*)

THE REVOLT AGAINST ANATOLE FRANCE

OCTOBER, 1924

Anatole France's last name may be made to hold a certain significance. The writer who bore that name stood for a France that, in literature, had followed the Symbolist movement, and which died with the War. Anatole France was a writer who had carried the famous French *clarté,* or "clarity," to a point of nauseous perfection, in the eyes of the young. To the latter, a page by the author of *The Red Lily* is, at once, perfectly lucid and perfectly empty. This is somewhat more than hinted at in that masterpiece of irony, the speech which M. Paul Valéry delivered upon taking France's chair in the Academy. Anatole France was too graceful, too amiable, too much the "smiling sceptic"; and it was, particularly, this "smiling scepticism" that *les jeunes* resented most deeply. In other words, Anatole France had become a symbol, a symbol against which to revolt.

Those young men, accordingly, who happened to be on their way at the time from Dada to *Surréalisme* could not well pass up the occasion of France's death and ostentatious public obsequies, in October, 1924. They seized the opportunity to utter, in the strongest terms and the most shocking manner they could think of, all that they thought, not merely of Anatole France, but of the things for which the dead man stood. The result was a manifesto entitled *Un Cadavre* ("A Corpse") made public on the day of the funeral. Among the contributors, we find: Louis Aragon; Paul Éluard; Joseph Delteil; Philippe Soupault; and Drieu La Rochelle. The tone of the manifesto is sufficiently indicated by the title of Aragon's contribution: "Did you ever slap a corpse?" (*Avez-vous déjà giflé un mort?*); as well as by the prefacing motto, a quotation from France's own *Thaïs: Il était devenu si hideux, qu'en passant la main*

sur son visage il sentit sa laideur ("He had become so hideous that, in running his hand over his face, he could feel his own ugliness").

Of the contributions to *Un Cadavre,* Joseph Delteil's was, spiritually speaking and with his own generation in view, the most to the point. It is, therefore, the one given here.

ANATOLE FRANCE

Or Gilded Mediocrity

By Joseph Delteil

Ah, no, indeed, I cannot, I will not call him: Master! There is in such an appellation something grave and lofty to which this low spirit never attained. And when I say "low spirit," I mean: on the level of the crowd. There is between Anatole France and a ribbon-counter-clerk a difference in quantity but not in quality. And I love, I respect only *quality.*

Yes, I know, all the temperamental females and females by temperament swoon away over his prose: but the males!

This mediocre chap succeeded in expanding the boundaries of mediocrity. This talented writer carried his talent to the very gate of genius. But he was left standing at the gate.

They tell the story that, when M. Léopold Kahn said to him one day: "You are the best fellow in the world!" Anatole France replied: "I think that I am, at least, a civilized being." Ah, what a prophetic saying that was! And how I like to apply it to him in the nastiest sense of the word: vellum-bound mind, cup of tea in hand, a civilized being, yes, old top, a civilized being! . . . But we—we want barbarians!

And polished! This chap was excessively, infinitely polished, in his person and in his style. Polished as a pearl! But the tiniest millet-seed. . . .

We are hungry, and we are thirsty. Anatole France is a diet of hors-d'oeuvres!

Really, he does not interest me, he does not interest us. He is a matter of absolute indifference. He played no part in our lives, in our searchings, in our battles. He lived alone, hermetically sealed. Not the faintest trace in him of a curiosity with regard to the ardors of youth, not a call, not a gesture. Yes, we are as little interested in him as he was in us. Is not that our right?

He has been our Voltaire, they tell us! Yes, Voltaire, and nothing but Voltaire. But it is not of Voltaires that we have need (the world is swarming with little Voltaires, miniature Voltaires); we have need of Rousseau's, of Bonaparte's, of Robespierre's. . . .

And let us not be taken in by his nominal Communism! Where deeds are lacking, words are sterile. Blanqui spent forty years in prison. The only Communists I can stand for are those that are in jail.

In reality, Anatole France owes much to the drawing-rooms. Good Lord, he's the perfect parlorite.

He is a vase—empty. A trinket that might catch and hold the eye for an instant, but which is incapable of getting any man in his guts. This formal perfection lacks depth and sap. Empty! Everything is empty, in him and around him. His books trickle through your fingers like sand. His work is built on sand. . . .

He is a plane surface—one dimension only. Today, this dubitative, negative side of his intelligence looks so cheap to us. It is really a little too simple!

Memory alone functions in his universe. Reminiscences assembled with taste. No, I certainly do not deny the taste. I do not deny the grace, the agility of mind, the happy mannerisms, the limpidity of language, the harmony and the honey; but I say that all these virtues are void of substance and of marrow, isolated and sterile, and I will have none of them!

This sceptic, this amiable sceptic leaves me cold. It is for passion that I am passionate. I am mad for optimism, for faith, for ardor, and for blood. I love life, and my heart beats only for life.

Anatole France is dead!

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE REVOLT AGAINST REASON (THE SUPER-REALIST REVOLUTION): 1924

For a period of four years, during the years 1921, 1922, 1923 and 1924, the end-of-the-War Dadaistic spirit had slumbered; it seemed that the spirit as well as the Movement was dead, if not forgotten. Early in the year 1924, however, we have witnessed something like a crisis in literary and aesthetic thinking; and in the month of October of the same year, we have beheld the future Surréalistes staging a "funeral" for Anatole France. The death of France and the world-wide tributes paid to him appear to have brought matters to a head; and on the first of December, 1924, we have the appearance of a new review entitled *La Révolution Surréaliste.* Dada had been resurrected!

The new movement represented a grouping of those *"humoristes désespérés"* who, spiritual disciples of Jacques Vaché, may be looked upon as the true and original Dadaists. Among the contributors to the first number of *La Révolution Surréaliste,* we find: André Breton, to become the leader and, with Aragon, the aesthetician of the movement; Louis Aragon; Benjamin Péret; Pierre Naville; Paul Éluard; Roger Vitrac; J.-A. Boiffard; Robert Desnos; Pierre Reverdy; Philippe Soupault; Joseph Delteil; André Masson; etc. Among the plastic artists associated with the foregoing, we find: the American Man Ray; Giorgio de Chirico; Max Ernst; Pablo Picasso.

The spiritual trend of the new group was indicated by the famous *"enquête"* which was opened in the first number: *"Le suicide est-il une solution?"* (Is suicide a way out?) For the responses to this query, see *La Révolution Surréaliste,* No. 2. The question is indicative of the state of crystallization of the young after-the-War advance-guard mind at the moment. It marks the beginning of a theme, a thread, a motive which is to be found running through the four-year period, 1925–1929. With this motive, we shall deal more in detail later; in 1929, it attains a peak of intensity with the actual (no longer theoretical, talked-of) suicide of young Jacques Rigaut; meanwhile, in 1928, the idea of suicide has undergone a sort of

crisis with the *Discontinuité* group; while during the years 1924 to 1928, the question posed by the Surréalistes is constantly dallied with: *"La Révolution Surréaliste,* addressing itself without distinction to all, hereby opens the following symposium: One lives, one dies. What part does the will play in all that? It would seem that one slays himself as one dreams. It is not a moral question that we raise: Suicide, is it a way out?" And the answers were to be received by the Bureau de Recherches Surréalistes.

For *Surréalisme* started with a certain scientific background. Of its three real founders, Breton, Aragon and Soupault, two were physicians and neurological specialists, interested in the psychic and the sub-conscious and unconscious life and in the labors of such men as Janet, Myers, Freud and Jastrow, as well as in the metapsychical researches of Richet, Gellé and the British spiritualists. In other words, the background was one of *morbid* psychology and pathology, which provides a certain bond of sympathy with the *poètes maudits* of the nineteenth century. (The fondness of the Surréalistes for such "precursors" as Lautréamont and Rimbaud is to be noted; Baudelaire, like the American Poe, they are inclined to reject as "bourgeois.")

All this radically affects the writer's approach to his task. The old view of art is ruled out; the constructive intelligence is banished and what we have is, rather, that poetic "incantation" of which M. Rivière already has had something to say. Art now becomes a tampering with the powers of darkness, as focused by the modern subconscious; and literary, or rather poetic, composition, which is a collusion with those dark powers, becomes an automatic process,— "automatic writing," of which much has been heard since 1924— cf. Jacques Vaché's "flaming collusion of rare words." This is quite different from that view of poetry held by M. Paul Valéry, for example: "a solemn festival of the intellect"; but a certain relationship may, nevertheless, be discovered between this new "aesthetic" and that *"poésie pure"* which achieves a culmination in M. Valéry, and which M. Émile Bouvier has defined as a *"sui generis* satisfaction occasioned by the juxtaposition of vocables."

"Automatic writing," however, and *Surréalisme* as well, really had begun three years before, in 1921, with a slender little book published by Breton and Soupault and entitled *Las Champs magnétiques.*

"It was at that period," says Soupault, that André Breton and I discovered this process (at the moment we regarded it as but a

process) which we named, in honor of Guillaume Apollinaire, *'surréalisme.'* We determined to make use of this manner of writing (reminiscent of Rimbaud's *'Je tiens le système'* and of the *'Chants de Maldoror'*) in getting out a book in a couple of weeks; that book was *Les Champs magnétiques,* and it was followed by a dramatic piece entitled *S'il vous plait."*

For it was, of course, Apollinaire, the great immediate precursor of after-the-War modernity, who had fathered the word, and in no small part the idea.

The following excerpt will serve to give an idea of the character of the writing in *Les Champs magnétiques.*

From "LES CHAMPS MAGNÉTIQUES"

("The Magnetic Fields")

We lose our heads, and we forget even our cherished projects. A dairywoman seated in front of her shop frightens us.

"I listen at the gates of the subway after the closing-hour. The little fine rain has a hard time getting rid of the prowler that follows it."

"Your hand upon my shoulder becomes a bite, and your voice hides in the folds of the death-rattle of the dying."

"Your lassitudes are out of the ordinary, and if you listen to me, we will go take shelter under that big tree."

"The trees are all a shadow, and I do not care to stop except in front of those repainted walls. I shall forget straight lines. You don't know where that big circle is that you gave me?"

"I think I took it on a barrel of sun. It was for the sake of example. The streets and your heart have been empty for so long."

"I no longer see that old man who smokes cigar-butts. He runs anywhere. They shout orders at him which he doesn't hear. They speak and you do not hear. Can it be you haven't understood what we said? Look at our hands, they are covered with blood. Go over to that woman and ask if the gleam of her eyes is for sale."

"My head is beginning to be hard to take on account of the thorns. Come, my dear friend, down toward the fish-market. I have seen in the eyes of a goldfish a little wheel that whirled as in a watch-case. I've had the animal sent to M. Richepin to give him something to think about. . . ."

It is worth noticing the relation between this sort of automatic writing and that element of incoherence and surprise (*coq-à-l'ane*),

resulting in poetic pleasure, which is stressed in the work of such men as Max Jacob, Apollinaire and Cocteau. The two are sometimes mingled as in the following dramatic "Sketch" by Breton and Soupault.

YOU'LL FORGET ME. Sketch.

SCENE I.—Characters: Bath-robe, Umbrella.

BATH-ROBE (*shouts three times, the third time after having opened the window*): I say, what is that tree, that little leopard which I patted the other day on my way home?

UMBRELLA.—You're going to catch cold without a blanket. What an awfully uncomfortable trip. The chimneys and the sirens wind stealthily past; how times have changed! I told you very plainly: a camomile-colored star-basin is less sugary than your little niece's eyes.

(There is a knock.)

UMBRELLA.—The table is not rented (*praised*). (*Curtain.*)

The first number of *La Révolution Surréaliste* was prefaced by the following statement: "Surréalisme is not offered as the exposition of a doctrine. Certain ideas of which it makes use as a point of departure are not by any means to be taken as indicating its future development. This first number of *La Révolution Surréaliste* presents, therefore, nothing in the nature of a definitive revelation. The results obtained by automatic writing, the dream-narrative, for example, are here represented; but no result coming from symposiums, experiments or researches are as yet to be found in its pages; everything is to come."

The point of view of one outside the movement may afford us a little more objectivity. M. Jacques Rivière, in his *Reconnaissance à Dada* (*Nouvelle Revue Française,* August, 1920), draws attention to certain aspects of the Super-realist spirit, then embodied in Dada, and his observations must have been enlightening to the future Surréalistes themselves:

"To lay hold of the being before it yields to incompatibility; to attain it in its incoherence, or better, in its primitive coherence, before the idea of contradiction has become apparent, and has forced it to self-reduction and to construction; to substitute for its logical unity, compulsorily acquired, its absurd and only original unity: such is the end pursued by all the Dadaists in their writing. . . . Language, for the Dadas, is no longer a means; it is an entity. Scepticism in matter of syntax is here duplicated by a sort of

mysticism. Even when not daring to admit it frankly, the Dadas are constantly tending toward that *Surréalisme* which was the ambition of Apollinaire. They look upon the mind as being, above all, a passage-way, and they feel that by sedulously disencumbering it of the things—it is impossible to say what—brought in by words, they shall be able to go through that passage-way spontaneously, something which they would never be able to do by the aid of any discoverable or fixable formula. 'Try, and see how hard it is,' writes Paul Éluard, 'to remain absolutely pure. We then become aware of all the ties that bind us.' Deprive language of all utility, assure it of a perfect vacuity, and we shall at once behold unfamiliar elements winning it over to their own uses. No sooner have we broken, precisely, all previous bonds between words than we find others forming, and these, in turn, will have something to teach us,—too bad if we cannot say what."

The "aestheticians" of *Surréalisme,* as have been stated, are Breton and Aragon, particularly the former. Breton's *Manifeste du Surréalisme,* together with his *Poisson soluble* (bound in the same volume, published by Kra) appeared in 1924.

"It is with bad faith," says Breton, in his *Manifeste,* "that our right to employ the word SURRÉALISME in the very special sense in which we understand it has been disputed; for it is obvious that, before we came along, the word had not won a foothold. I shall, therefore, define it once for all:

"SURRÉALISME, n. m. Pure psychic automatism, by means of which one proposes to express, either verbally or by means of writing, the real functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exerted by reason, and without regard to any aesthetic or moral preoccupations.

"ENCYCL. *Philos.* Super-realism is based upon a belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association which have been hitherto neglected, in the omnipotence of the dream, in the disinterested play of thought. It tends definitively to ruin all the old psychic mechanisms and to take their place in the solution of the principal problems of life."

After remarking that a number of poets, from Dante to Shakespeare "in his best days," might be looked upon as super-realists, M. Breton has a word to say on genius: "In the course of the various attempts which I have made to reduce and explain what is overconfidently known as genius, I have found nothing which could not in the end be attributed to some other process." He adds:

"Young's NIGHT THOUGHTS are super-realistic from beginning to end; unfortunately, it is a priest who is speaking, a bad priest, no doubt, but a priest.

"Swift is a super-realist in his maliciousness.
"Sade is a super-realist in his sadism.
"Chateaubriand is a super-realist in his exoticism.
"Constant is a super-realist in politics.
"Hugo is a super-realist when he is not stupid.
"Desbordes-Valmore is a super-realist in love.
"Bertrand is a super-realist in the past.
"Rabbe is a super-realist in death.
"Poe is a super-realist in adventure.
"Baudelaire is a super-realist in morality.
"Rimbaud is a super-realist in the practice of life and otherwise.
"Mallarmé is a super-realist in confidence.
"Jarry is a super-realist in absinthe.
"Nouveau is a super-realist in the kiss.
"Saint-Pol-Roux is a super-realist in the symbol.
"Fargue is a super-realist in atmosphere.
"Vaché is a super-realist in ego.
"Reverdy is the super-realist at home.
"St. J. Perse is the super-realist at a distance.
"Roussel is a super-realist in anecdote.
"Etc."

In his book, M. Breton takes occasion to describe the actual process of automatic writing, and his *Poisson soluble* may be taken as a sufficiently lucid attempt at this kind of writing. He also has a good deal to say concerning freedom, the imagination, freedom of the imagination, madness and the fear of madness, the stupidity of contemporary novels, psychology, logic, the marvelous and the supreme value and significance of the marvelous, etc. On this last point: "Let us cut the question short: The marvelous is always beautiful, anything that is marvelous is beautiful, and only the marvelous is beautiful."

A brief extract from the *Poisson soluble* will give an idea of the manner in which M. Breton puts his theories into practice.

FROM LE POISSON SOLUBLE

("The Soluble Fish")

The birds lose their form after their colors. They are reduced to an Arachean existence so deceptive that I throw my gloves away. My yellow gloves with black clocks fall upon a plain dominated by a fragile belfrey. I cross my arms and watch. I watch for the laughs that come from the earth and become at once flowering umbels. The night is here, like a carp leaping to the surface of a violet stream and the strange laurels interlace in the sky which comes down from the sea. They bind a faggot of boughs inflamed in the wood and the woman or the fairy who puts them on her shoulders seems to be flying (stealing) now, as the champagne-colored stars grow motionless. The rain begins falling; it is an eternal favor and admits of the most delicate reflections. In a single drop, there is the passage of a yellow bridge by lilac caravans; in another which passes it there is a buoyant life and crimes in an inn. To the south, in a cove, love shakes out its shadow-filled locks and there is a propitious boat which circulates over the roofs. But the water-rings break one by one and upon the tall pile of nocturnal landscapes there rests the aurora of a finger. The prostitute begins her song more roundabout than a cool rivulet in the country of the nailed Wing but it is only absence after all. A real lily raised to the glory of the stars undoes the thighs of the awakening combustion and the group they form goes off to the discovery of the strand. But the soul of the other woman is covered with white feathers that fan it gently. The truth rests upon the mathematical rattans of the infinite and all goes forward in the order of the eagle sitting up behind whereas the genius of the vegetable flotillas claps its hands and the oracle is rendered by the fluid electric fishes.

As for Louis Aragon, his *Traité du style,* published several years after the formal launching of the movement, scarcely lives up to its title, which is largely ironic. To the first number of *La Révolution Surréaliste,* however, he contributed certain observations which are worth quoting:

"The data of common knowledge are established in accordance with a constant ratio, and are accompanied by a judgment bearing upon the existence of those abstractions with which it deals; this judgment is reality. The idea of the real is foreign to all true philosophy (we here catch up with Plato and Berkeley). It is madness to want to attribute that which is characteristic of abstraction to that concrete notion toward which the ideal apperceptions of the mind

tend. In denying the real, philosophic knowledge begins by establishing a new relation between its materials: the unreal; and invention, for example, immediately proceeds to move in the sphere of the unreal. Then it denies the unreal in turn, escapes from it; and this two-fold negation, far from ending in an affirmation of the real, repels the latter and confuses it with the unreal, and thus surpasses the two ideas by possessing itself of a middle-term where they are at once denied and affirmed, which conciliates and contains them: the *super-real,* which is one of the determining factors in poetry. Invention, to sum up these remarks, is summed up in the establishment of an unreal relation between the concrete elements and its mechanism is inspiration."

As to the poetic image, one of the early Surréaliste poets, Pierre Reverdy, has this to say:

"The image is a pure creation of the mind.

"It cannot spring from any comparison but from the bringing together of two more or less remote realities.

"The more distant and legitimate the relation between the two realities brought together, the stronger the image will be—the more emotive power and poetic reality it will possess. . . ."

M. Bouvier, as a sympathetic chronicler, thus sums up the present state of *Surréalisme:*

"Super-realist art remains to be created, by virtue of this metaphysics, and we are still in the experimental stage. The complete system greatly exceeds the bounds of a literary theory. It finds, however, it would seem, certain immediate applications in sociology, in the sense that society must first of all be demolished as Dada had demolished literature. Individualist revolt here ends in the social revolution. It is not our business to follow up, on this head, the various Surréaliste manifestoes and their signers; we merely may note that, in our day as on the morrow of the Romantic fray, a certain fraction of the literary insurgents have refused to lay down their arms and have joined the political revolutionists."

For the Surréalistes are avowedly Communist in politics, but their Communism, at least down to the year 1930, has been of an often dubious, if not lukewarm, variety, and this lukewarmness and doubt have led to their being frequently suspected and rejected by those young writers definitely lined up with the Proletarian cause, the active literary-Communist group in France. The "revolution" in which they are primarily interested, to tell the truth, appears to be a rather vague one,—a spiritual, rather than a political revolution:

an overturning of established modes of thought and feeling that will make possible a different life upon the earth and, incidentally, a different art and literature. In 1930, we shall find them being called upon by Moscow to state clearly their position. In the interim, there is much talk of "the revolution" in general, without too many particulars.

While the Surréalistes are constantly publishing what they term "texts," many of these are scientific rather than literary documents. The hard-and-fast old-line Surréalistes decline to appear in any non-Surréaliste anthology or with other than Surréaliste writers; but with the exception of Aragon and Paul Éluard the poet, the movement and its spirit are amply represented by the writers who have come out of Surréalisme. Éluard happens to be a very fine poet, and his alignment with a literary party is purely incidental. Aragon, when he chooses to be, is a masterly writer of French prose; his *Le Paysan de Paris* is one of the important 1924–1930 books; among his other works may be mentioned: *Anicet ou le panorama; Le Libertinage; Les Aventures de Telémaque;* and *Le Mouvement perpetuel.* For Éluard, see the *Capitale de la douleur.* Breton's *Nadja,* 1928, is a work that drew praise even from his bitter enemy, Cocteau; it is probably his masterpiece, and is one of the best of the professionally-surréaliste productions. Other works by Breton are: *Mont de Pieté* (1919); *Clair de Terre* (1923); *Les Pas Perdus* (1924; not to be overlooked); *Legitime Defense* (1926); *Introduction au Discours sur le peu de Réalité* (1927); and *Le Surréalisme et la Peinture* (1928).

WRITERS OUT OF DADA AND SUPER-REALISM

In his *Manifeste du Surréalisme* (first Manifesto, p. 42), Breton takes occasion to list the "absolute" Super-realists (*"ont fait acte du* SURRÉALISME ABSOLU"): Aragon; Baron; Boiffard; Breton; Carrive; Crevel; Delteil; Desnos; Éluard; Gérard; Limbour; Malkine; Morise; Naville; Noll; Péret; Picon; Soupault; Vitrac. Of these, we have already had samples of Delteil's work—the Surréaliste before *Surréalisme.* Soupault we shall have in the section immediately following, as an exemplar of the Surréaliste-American influence. Fortunately for the purposes of an anthology such as this,

one does not have to depend, for samples of Super-realism, upon the communicating members of the creed; some of the best Super-realism, indeed, is to be found in the work of dissenters, those who, Surréalistes in all but name, have withdrawn from the party, like Desnos and Ribemont-Dessaignes, those who have been read out of the party like Delteil, or who have gradually, almost imperceptibly drifted away as has Soupault. There are, also, those larger individual figures such as Fargue and Reverdy who have never been confined within the limits of this or any other group. (Cf. Breton, in the preceding pages: "Fargue is a Super-realist in atmosphere. . . . Reverdy is the Super-realist at home.") In addition, there are yet younger men such as Monny de Boully or Georges Hugnet, who have either been aligned with the Surréalistes in the past, as has the former, or who remain upon the outskirts of the movement as does the latter.

Desnos affords us a good example of the Surréaliste "text." Both he and Ribemont-Dessaignes are now associated with the *Bifur* group, of which the second-named writer is the leader, and which may be taken as representing a secession; we shall have more to do with this group later, in connection with a revolt against the "dictatorship" of Breton. In any case, Ribemont-Dessaignes' writing is distinctly Surréaliste, and is by way of being an application of the Super-realist technique to individual and social revolt; the *Bifur* group since its inception has become constantly more Communistic.

Robert Desnos

Robert Desnos is one of the original Surréaliste group; he will be found in the first number of La Révolution Surréaliste *and after. His works include:* La Liberté ou l'Amour; C'est les bottes de 7 lieues cette phrase: "je me vois" *(illustrated by A. Masson);* Deuil pour Deuil; Corps et Biens. *As stated, he is now associated with the* Bifur *group.*

TEXTS

The North Star sends to the South Star the following telegram: "Behead at once your red comet and your violet comet they are traitors. North Star." The South Star's face clouds over, and its brown head droops on its charming neck. The feminine regiment of comets at its feet flutters about merrily. Pretty canaries in the

cage of eclipses. Should it strip its mobile treasure from its pretty red, its pretty violet? Those two comets which, nimbly, at five o'clock in the evening, lift a taffeta skirt over a knee of the moon. The pretty red with moist lips, friend of adulteresses and whom more than one abandoned lover has found crouching in his bed, with drooping lashes and pretending to be lifeless, the pretty red in short with dark blue clothes, with dark blue eyes, with a dark blue heart like a lost Medusa, far from all shores in a tepid current haunted by phantom ships. And what about the pretty violet! the pretty red-haired violet, of the pretty violet color, with scarlet ear-lobes, eater of sea-urchins and whose bewitching crimes have gradually deposited admirable blood-tears and admired whole heavens upon her gown, upon her precious gown. Should she strangle them with her diamond fingers, she the charming South Star, in accordance with the advice of the North Star, the magical, tempting and adorable North Star, who has a diamond replacing the nipple of a breast warm and white as the reflection of the sun at noon?

Steerswomen, comets violet and red, steerswomen of the phantom ship whither are you guiding our cargo of whores and skeletons whose superb copulation brings to the regions through which you pass the consolations of eternal love? Seducers! The violet of the violet is the fishing-line and the red's knee serves as compass. The whores of the phantom ship are forty-four and here are a few of their names: Rose; Mystery; Hug; Midnight; Police; Direct; Mad; Hearts and Spades; Mine; Far; Enough; Gold; Green Goblet; Murmur; La Galandine and the mother-of-kings whose years are barely sixteen, what are known as the best years. As a last resort, the skeletons of the *Armada* give battle to those of the *Medusa.*

Up there, in the sky, float the dispersed Medusas.

Before turning comet, the South Star sends this telegram to the North Star: "Dip the sky in your icebergs! justice is done—— South Star."

Perfidious North Star!
Disturbing South Star!
Adorable!
Adorable!

. . . . .

William the Conqueror, the same who discovered the law of attraction of boats, is buried not far from here. A grave-digger is sitting on a tombstone. He has already aged eighty years since the

beginning of this tale. He does not wait long. From a mole-hill at his feet comes a greenish light, which does not astonish him in the least, used as he is to silence, to forgetfulness and to crime and knowing of life only the mild hum which accompanies the perpendicular fall of the sun at the moment when, huddled one against the other, the hands of the clock tired of waiting for night call vainly with a fatidic cry a dozen times repeated for the violet procession of ghosts and phantoms held far away, in a chance bed, between love and mystery at the foot of liberty with arms open against the wall. The grave-digger recalls that it was he who formerly when his ears did not jump in the least slew in this place the queen mole whose enormous fur clad in turn his mistresses with an iron armor a thousand times more redoubtable than Nessus' tunic and against which his kisses took on the consistency of ice and glass and in the *cham frem* of which for nights and nights he was aware of the slow and regular flight of his hair endowed with life eternal. The most illustrious funerals were prolonged to wait for him. By the time he arrived those present grown somewhat older and occasionally even the undertakers and the mourners were deceased. He tossed them pell-mell into the grave reserved for a single and glorious death without anyone's daring to protest so silence-and-respect-imposing on the black-clad was the green aureole of his hair. But lo, with the midnight anniversary of the death of William the Conqueror the last hair is gone leaving a hole, a black hole in his cranium whereas the green light keeps on radiating from the mole-hill.

And now, preceded by the slow grating of forced locks, comes the funeral-procession of the *Mystery*—followed by the keys in closed ranks.

They are all there, those that fell into the hands of spies, the one that the assassin lover broke in the lock as he left, the one that the judge threw into the river after having definitely shut the door of reprisals, the golden keys of jailers stolen by their captives, the keys of towns sold to the enemy by blonde virgins, the diamond keys of chastity-girdles, the keys to bankers' strong-boxes emptied on the sly by an adventurer, those which the young and ideal conqueror noiselessly withdraws from the lock to watch with one eye the blonde virgin going to bed.

And while the heavens resounded with divine locks hastily shut by the grave-digger, the grave-digger died under the cannibalistic piling-up of the keys, on the tomb of William the Conqueror,

whilst, in the mole-hill, by the green light, the funeral-procession of the golden ant was going by, the lock of intelligences.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes

Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, best known as the author of Ugolin, *1926, was born in 1884. He began life as a painter but abandoned the brush for the pen; he has been writing, now, for the past ten years, and is looked upon by some as the most révolté of modern French prosateurs. His prose is marked by an ever-present sense of mystery, by a certain gift of clairvoyance, and by an extraordinary degree of energy. He lives in the country near Paris and commutes back and forth; he is a tremendous worker, much of his work is done on the train, and his fellow-commuters provide him with no little of his material. He says of himself and his work:* "Je ne parle autrement dans la réalité qu'en rêve."

Other works are: L'autruche aux yeux clos, *1921;* Ariane, *1925;* Les frontières humaines, *1930.*

THE COFFEE-CUP

David, adolescent, was seated on the edge of his bed as on a rock. An invisible sea came to pour foam over his feet, then receded mockingly, with thick, fat waves, in which he recognized his exasperated weariness. Through the open window, the sky came in dragging after it bloody shreds of distance, of clouds and of heat, and these it hurled in David's face, until he had the impression of being covered with a sweat that was not his own.

A few minutes before, the young man had been leaning out over the landscape with a ferociously hungry desire to consume everything in sight. This had puffed out his heart, which had grown so big it had ended by cracking with great beats, and had threatened to break under the menace of such an appetite for the universal, so that he had had to crucify his desire and abandon the sight of the landscape in order to reduce his muscles to the smallest common divisor of so many unfamiliar wonders. And now it was the room, the curtain with its faded flowers, the cracked wash-basin, the dirty linen, cigarette-butts, shoes and papers, dust and stench, agglom-

erated in a provisional pudding in an atmosphere of nervous flies, breath of resentment and of half-digested desire, a confusion which a tiny spark impossible to produce would have sufficed to explode to reassemble the bits under the sublime form of possession and of certainty, likewise provisional.

Seated on the bed, his legs huddled over checker-board images which he would have had to carry to the point of mortal extinction in order to arrive at an acceptable conclusion—alas, he'd lost the game—he was torn between emotions of absorbent cotton and of steel which a dreamlike analogy prevented his dissociating. And yet he was young, life was beginning. There was tomorrow, and day-after-tomorrow, and so on, all full of juice to be squeezed. But the alcohol from their fermentation was intoxicating him already. What he lacked was necessity which gets you from behind and gives you the *coup du père François,* or rips your belly open with a single stroke and leaves quivering in the sun those noble or shameful organs accustomed to the intimacy and the cellar-like odor concentrated in the mid-body.

To escape the embraces of nature turning the utensils of his room upside down, David went out and closed his door after him. In the hotel corridor it was almost as gloomy as it was under his ribs. But, thank God, there was no blood beating there. A shadowy odor of resine and of sauce coming up in spirals from the underground kitchens reigned supreme and almost as sweetish as a stick of barley sugar or a nougat. David breathed all this in delightedly, and his glances drifted slowly away in a syrupy calm.

A whole series of doors opened onto this corridor. Mild and modest as lowered eyelids. David conceived the pleasure of raising the lids drooping over the tiny light of straight-dressed souls, of groping so to speak for the scintillation of the crystal illusion perfidiously open on a darkness that passed as light. To dive into humid eyes and to hear above him the gurgle of his fleeing assurance, as one puts his slack legs down to the soul's depths, amid the algae of mystery and of feelings. . . .

But it seemed to him that his heels were hitting real bottom. In front of each door a pair of shoes made a darker or a brighter splash. David forgot everything in examining these weird carpet-animals, which he as last decided to take for shells abandoned by the mollusks or crustaceans that customarily inhabited them. And he in turn smiled and was sick at heart. Men's shoes indeed are sometimes frightful dens. Think of the terrible and debased jubilation of

those toes warm in their leather casings, while up above are nerves and bleeding shafts, a cold-digesting heart, cold octupus heart with wide-spread flaccid tentacles.

David took a few steps and stopped before a pair of little russet shoes. They were not alone; at their side, a pair of big clogs were wallowing in the memory of the mud that still stained them. But David was concerned only with the little shoes so delicate and attractive with a dark entry-way as radiant and mysterious as a mouth. He separated them from their coarse companions with a sort of jealousy. He felt a violent tightening around his heart at thought of the relationship between the two pairs, a relationship due to the possessive alliance of two bodies with which they were not in concurrence, the one a pretty garland, a flowering promontory, the other something like a half-wit child, one-eyed and deaf-mute.

Having parted them, David raised the russet shoes to a level with his face. They struck him as being as once heavy and without weight, virtually laden as they were with a woman's body, the perspective of which he could see rising in tiers above him, the scattered locks lost in the moisture-stains of the ceiling.

He felt that he was approaching a solution the terms of which, gaping like the lips of a wound parted by the destructive passage of the knife-blades of nature, refused to come together unless something came to fill up the terrifying void. He was thinking no longer of problems or of desires, his heart was undone. A beneficent rain was depositing in the depths of the darkness the spangles of his grief which up to then had rendered his day like a block of granite; it was an odor fallen from that erected body that David held by the wooden heels.

He was conscious now of a woman appearing at the other end of the corridor; she was going back to her room in morning négligé. Was it that one David held in his palm? By a sleight-of-hand trick worthy of vaudeville, the nude body had left those russet shoes to reappear at the other end of the corridor, but clad, so that David on the spot could not be sure of the identity of the two persons, and when he came to himself, the lady was beside him. He was still holding the two little shoes. She paused and from her attitude he understood that he was standing in her way, that this was the door to her room, and these her shoes. He understood, but not entirely; his own weight aggravated by a fearful superior pressure nailed him to the floor, his eyes so open that his avid soul emptied itself like an artery.

He had seen this woman the night before and other days in the hotel, she was charming, but he had not supposed that she would be able to simplify the universe to such a point, so to appease the conflicts of the world and of the soul, to vaporize all problems and reunite the fragments of desire. Think of the consenting virgin's shudder when her possessor starts tearing off the last bit of clothing; it was this that shook David. This woman was taking his heart in both her hands, was opening it like a shirt, was biting inside it, and it was the echo-filled abyss that was turning over his dizziness and gushing up to her. She smiled and her smile burst in the midst of David. She said: "What a baby!" and brought her face up until it touched the young man's.

With a single clap, a great flash shot from one pole to the other of David's torment. The constraint and the breaks, the griefs and the jerks ended in a pinnacle of steady light. He sighed: Mamma—— and felt himself falling with a loud cry into the woman's lips.

But at this same moment even immediate reality began to seem further and further away. A myriad solfataras perforated her and interposed between her and him their vaporous torments. Too near the woman's open eyes, like the water in a pond, or better at the bottom of a glass from which one drinks, David had shut his own, and a red darkness separated him from the flesh that was so close. He fell asleep in short and began traveling, borrowing those extra-rapid means of communication that sleep makes use of.

The red darkness ceased to be darkness; it lost even its red property. A wide brown circle was to be made out there, itself pierced by another darker circle which David could see was the mouth of a long tunnel through which streamed an incessant sound analogous to that of a pulse-beat. It is the mechanism which feeds the atmosphere of the tunnel, he reflected. And he breathed in deep breaths, going forward all the while.

That which most astonished this strange traveler which he had become was the direction that he was following or at least his changes in position with regard to gravity. At the beginning, he had felt his weight on his feet, with the floor of the tunnel under his shoe-soles. Then he observed that he could perceive above his head the orifice, clearer now, by which he had entered, and that he was following the axis of a tunnel feet first. He was sinking into the earth, but the more he sank the more sonorous became the pulse-beats of the air-machine, and the more conscious he was of losing his own avoirdupois. At last, without being aware of the

slightest upsetting of his body, nor of any change in the things round about him, he was obliged to recognize the fact that in place of sinking, he was ascending, head first. This progressive movement however had lost nothing of its rectilinear character. He said: I must be going through the earth, which is equal to saying: I'm on my way to the antipodes.

And in truth, heavy as he was, as heavy as if the whole weight of the terrestrial mass were hooked upon him, it was not long before he emerged from the tunnel; the tunnel was now only a well, the curb of which jutted out upon the Eiffel Tower. And it was on top the Eiffel Tower that David found himself. He caught sight of something floating above him. The flag, he thought; but he did not pay any attention to it, so fascinated was he by the spectacle spread out a short distance beneath him. Upon the lowest platform of the tower was a whole crowd of remarkable beings, the most remarkable beings on Earth.

David asked himself what they could be doing there. They must have come there in an astonishing hurry, for the majority of them were but half-clad. Some were even completely nude. All of them, in any event, afforded a glimpse of some intimate detail of their bodies, excellently calculated to give an unflattering impression of the human constitution.

It must have been by chance that they had laid hold of the tawdry finery with which they had partly covered their nakedness.

For of what use could that obviously dirty handkerchief be which one of them had futilely thrown over his shoulders without a thought for his hairy abdomen or his cork-screw loins. Another, in a pair of drawers, displayed a fleshy pouch where a pair of flabby breasts could be seen moving to the rhythm of his respiration. One, upon leaving, had snatched up his daughter's organdy hat, a necktie, a belt and a pair of garters, but exhibited a couple of small darkling thighs. Another was in a bath-robe within which a monstrous hernia refused to be confined. Another, finally, who was carefully dressed, still had not had the time to shoe himself completely, and one of his bare feet was sprouting with some unknown malady, in the form of a crater, a sea-anemone, more visible, upon his great toe, than an elephant's trunk.

There were also a few women, but they wore masculine accessories which were so apparent that the natural characteristics of their sex disappeared, overshadowed by a general indifference.

David did not have the time to take stock of this weird assemblage

nor to be astonished at the fact that it was made up of individuals who had lost their youth regardless of age, for they were all swept by a frantic agitation when he appeared. It was to be seen that the reason for their haste had been their fear of missing him.

At the same instant, leaning outward in spite of himself over the curb of the terrestrial well, David felt himself being drawn. All these beings had chameleon tongues covered with a viscous slaver, which came to snatch and drag him to them. And at the same time a completely bald old man, and without any hair on his body—save for a small tassel in the middle of his chest like a misplaced medal—this old man raised his voice, which was like a saw on a whetstone.

"Young man, you behold here all those born before you in need, and who have got and saved their baggage, or at least a little bit of their baggage. But they are hungry and thirsty, young man. Are you green and full of sap."

"Thanks!" said David, "I couldn't, Sir. Have mercy!"

"Say at least: *Mercy, Your Holiness!* But it's no use, for I am hungry, too!"

And David, stuck, drawn in, done for, felt himself in the midst of those warm and flaccid members, triturated, absorbed; he felt himself being slowly digested in the saliva of that multiple tongue; his only consciousness was one of the irreparable, and of the taste of that human saliva, of the dizzying odor of those mouths.

However, he was never to know how it ended. Journey and sleep were cut short as the result of an uncoupling. David opened his eyelids; a few inches away, a woman's face was disappearing with a smile, with moist eyes, and he was not to see it again.

Stupidly, David heard:

"My passage is paid."

And gently brushed aside, he had to give way, for he was still blocking the door. The door opened and closed on the lady.

David recovered his memory. This woman had just given him a kiss, the kiss that he had been expecting since birth to cure him of hatred and of solitude. And he discovered with terror that he had gone away during this kiss, that it had been of no use to him, and that the very memory of it was not to afford him the faintest recollection thereafter.

Vainly he ran his tongue over his lips, it only made that recent contact flee more quickly. A dense curtain had dropped between two mouths joined for an instant.

A few seconds later, David found himself in his room once more. Seated at his table, he perceived that he still held in his hand one of the little russet shoes. He sat there then regarding it as one regards an emptied coffee-cup—one that some one else has emptied.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

SERENADE TO CERTAIN COUNTERFEITERS

Under the diadems of iron and of zinc,
O mechanical consistency and frenzy of limits,
If freedom's fertile flower withers and dies,
Slave of the automaton liberators,
The last chance dies alas
And on the green and gleaming horse
One will no longer see the passing bone reared toward the sky
With its carrion shreds,
The gentle plane-trees
And the getting-out-of-bed of countrysides,
The cool children of hope,
The jellies of virtue, the great paper candles
Have they known the burning steps?
All is ashes in the waiting-room,
The wind is it pure,
Ice, death, sand, blood
Are they the last memories?
Undertakers of God, have you dusted out the coffin?
Have you spit on your belly before going forth to the fray?
Cemetery jackals, have you the smell of souls in your mouths
And you black thunder of terror,
Snapping of ribs,
Have you at a single stroke
Shivered the lion-heart and the pig's bladder?
The task is it voided like the cask of the sky?
Enough, false-hangmen, humid police, false scandals,
Merchants in bazaars!
You belch from having gnawed your nails too much and your coffer
And over your luxurious hide
Shoots the moldiness of the universe
And on your chin nun's down.

Like the cross your feet are rooted in ashes
But where then is your solitary satisfaction,
Duly shrived,
Traitors to my youth,
Tailor-made angel, feathers at a bargain?
One of your tears has dripped down and the earth has rotted.
Great commanders of the future and future comfort of old maids
Bouquet from the orange-grove of posterity.
You were but the ignoble buttocks of order
As the sergeants-major are its nostrils,
But one goes far astray in reckoning with the earth
I haven't hairs but a violin-string on my head
To give and receive
The last-minute thunder-clap
We do not yet know what reality is, we have gone astray in our reckoning with the earth
It is a time that sprouts even under the dirt of nails
Powder-filled and blood-filled,
Full of brains and entrails,
The better age of the great rains of ashes
The better weapon of which is yet to be built
Unknown to your tongues,
Swine!

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Léon-Paul Fargue

Léon-Paul Fargue was born at Paris in 1878, and has lived there all his life. He loves his native city, especially at night, and is something of a night-bird; his face is a familiar one at bars, in the early hours of the morning. As a poet, he has preserved an attitude of scornful isolation, which in part has contributed to his reputation. He is, however, a very real and a very fine poet; some one has remarked that most of his poems are in prose, and that most of his prose is poetry. One of his outstanding poetic qualities is his resonance; *and he is fond of inventing rare, strange, exploding words.*

It does not take long to give his bibliography; it consists of: Tancrède, *1912; and* Poèmes, *followed by* Pour la Musique, *1919.*

INTELLIGENCE AND FOLLY

Intelligence was running through the streets. She was running after folly. In their legs they had the passersby who carry napkins, the del credere commission dupes, the dyspeptic ministers, the professors who smell of the great, the sons of their works, the halt of mediate knowledge, the women of the world who believe only in their caste, in the theatre, in the Virgin and in Ideas, all the Zozos, all the adult Bibliothèque Rose, all the learned simpletons who lead the world.

Intelligence catches folly who falls backward on the pavement, long as a dyke. She screams, her tongue a propeller: "Help! Ah, the jade!" and bang! from the bottom of the pot-of-nerves, blackens the eye of the other who auscultates her and begins to reason. She screams: "Dirty Lesbian, I certainly regret having known you! Arrest her!" and she swoons. Intelligence, terrified, the compass veiled, feels pity, feels animal, takes her in her arms, and folly entices her and holds her to the ground, hugs her, embraces her to the extent of forming a sort of muco-pus. Another chewing-gum party. Intelligence is arrested, she has allowed all her packages to roll away: the books, the presents for a woman, a pasty in a wooden box, a bottle of eau-de-vie to make strong maids. It would be necessary to throw buckets of water over them to separate them.

Everybody makes a circle about them, the neuro-sanguine long to fight.—"But, sir, by what right?—But she's perfectly right!" A fire-alarm is sought. A friend tugs violently at my arm: "Look at what's coming." The burning snout of a hog, masked in green, snorts over us. Nothing stops the mail-truck, the autobus, the Almanach Hachette.

We had enough of this old story. All the time that they were Siamese twins (it would be more disagreeable but more truthful to say iniops) they were too tight to undertake, they kept house sadly from the interior, and all went as well as bad. From the day man, egregious man, in his cocoanut of a de luxe head, stuffed with a clock, an areometer and a few cruets, first imagined quartering them, man, egregious man, wounded them a thousand times on the membrane, made a thousand knife-cuts in the contract, by the ages of ages, and poured ant-hills and termite-hills of phrases over them. The navel-eye opened, they took to the fields, discovered each

other, threw themselves upon each other and intelligence fell madly in love with folly.

We no longer love intelligence. The operation seemed successful. It is she who does not hold still. We have been present at too many scenes, we are weary of receiving their confidences and their lamentations, it's an old pasting, odious to the comrades, we hold a grudge against them for not disentangling. Day of God! Let them break off and let's have it over with! It assumes the most passionate, the most fetid faces. I've seen others. They draw together in a dark street, in some side-alley (God-alley, for example, or Rue des Envierges) and one says to the other, each in turn, embracing her and sobbing: "I wish you no evil, myself, I wish you only good." And she passes her a tongue, and she scratches, and she slaps her! She's an old mistress, an "ex" as the college-boys say. When you were a child, you dressed in ten minutes, you slid down the bannister, you strode across Mme. Roth's stationery shop and you embelled yourself in the classroom that smelled of the serious plaything. And that swell sweat of recess! Your brain has grown, intelligence slays automatism by inches, you reflect, you don your suit in decomposing, you practise mecanotherapy, your wheel and your compasses prolong your skeleton, you count the eyelets in your shoes, you aim when urinating while you are proving to a woman that it is reasonable for her to love you, she sucks her finger with hate, each time you switch off the electricity you think of Bergson; each time you squeeze the tap in the kitchen sink very tight, you think of Marshal Foch.

Intelligence spreads in the same way as cancer, mania, beginning of knowledge, cancer, illness of health (sic), the stone of a cell localises the high temperature, the cell evolves, prolifers, the brain makes ideas, the earth makes truffles, the skin makes sarcomae, the oak makes the gall-nut, the drunkard's nose makes little ones, intelligence makes her own. It's recognised by the most famous doctors.

Artillery-Colonel Béhemot de Calculangle was seized with colic at the moment of running into battery, and he was not an animal, and he had a taste for letters.

He was wise, the King of Thulé who threw away his cup when it became longitudinal. The Gardens of Babylon suspended their gifts. The rain of ideas showers the manikin, my legs steal away, I can no longer walk. In the meantime the sky is spoiled. Witnesses of this duel, cleanliness and filth struggle foot to foot, pasted together, like light and shadow, Jacob and the angel, Beauty and the Beast.

Sisyphus eternally drives back his coprolith. Hercules, sweating benzine and chloride, beats Cacus every day, assiduously, as one beats a rug. The tall girl fixes her nails, the housewife washes her mourning. Machines cough dully in the night, until dawn, when the vacuum cleaners will swallow the grey armies, until the hour when tepid waters will rinse the vitamines for a day.

But what is this glory-hand that holds that large stone imperiously. And what a headdress! It's the largest spider in the whole world, it's the theraphose, whose habits are unknown. It counts toward us on its ten red-silk crutches. Hello! Hello! The white-water syringe!! Or the pomyles!!

Equilar
And metatar
The aarm
Exlended!

(*alarum*)

(*Translated by* Richard Thoma.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Pierre Reverdy

"The greatest poet living at the present time" is the tribute paid to Pierre Reverdy a few years ago by Breton, Aragon and Soupault; and these writers at the same time declared that, beside Reverdy, they were "but infants-in-arms." Reverdy has been compared to Mallarmé for his sovereign and disinterested attachment to his art.

Reverdy's first poems, Poèmes en prose, *were published in 1915, and it is since that time that his reputation has been slowly but surely made. He was born at Narbonne, September 13, 1889, and received his early education there. He came to Paris in 1910, and he assures us that, at this time, he scarcely was able to read and write. "When I came to Paris, I found it impossible to read a poet.—Art, which I love, has sometimes consoled me for artists." He adds that it has taken him fifteen years to learn to love poetry, to find the key to his art, and to "understand something of reality."*

Reverdy's poetry is stripped bare of all fripperies, and is possessed of a limpid, coherent, rounded quality; its danger is its monotony. The air, the trees, the wind, the heart and its sadness: these are his themes; and the selection here given is typical.

The poet's other bibliography includes: La Lucarne ovale, *poems, 1916;* Quelques poèmes, *1916;* Le Voleur de Talan, *poetic novel, 1917;* Les ardoises du Toit, *poems, 1918;* Les Jockeys Camouflés *and* Horstexte, *collections of tales, 1919;* La Guitare endormie, *tales and poems, 1919;* Self-Defense, *aesthetic criticism, 1919;* Etoiles peintes, *prose (illustrated by André Derain), 1921;* Coeur de chêne, *poems (illustrated by Manolo), 1921;* Cravates de chanvre, *poem (illustrated by Picasso), 1922;* Les Epaves du ciel, *complete collection (N. R. F.), 1924.*

FALL

While waiting for the dawn to unwrinkle, burst, become white and gold-powdered, this precise reflection, limited to firm angles, to straight lines, and even to the shivering leaves on the trees which are still trembling with the cold

by day
one hides
the long gloved hand of the night
pulls and relaxes us
we roll through the ravines
the nests of precipices
the rubbish of the ancient days

toward that badly built edifice where there opens not even a room numbered, alined, motionless at the end of the step-stifling path, bordered with copper light

While waiting until we shall all be in the same whiteness and without our distinctive signs and our insignia with that solitary flame which is lighted, that brief flame which arises and which we do not pursue. The bursting dawn of the sun and of dust.

LAND'S END

At the very minute when the roads were folding under the rain their heap of stones. Upon the path of surf and shocks to the green-striped carpet, to the sunset red, blotted velvet and swinging legs; the memory's weariness goes to sleep under the froth.

Seeks states of repose and the function of lights in this mingled night. Nothing emerges. The moon with its loadstone gives beaten

gold. The boards of the garden drown in the tree's tears. All the departures and journeyings begun, interrupted and the sky despoiled of the most beautiful of its stars.

A toothless mouth gapes—the night is stretching—gas-jets in the depths of the abysses dress ranks—the new road for processions marked out upon the gleaming sidewalks on the edge of marine retreats. For the sea is everywhere in the shadow where one waits—with its sound of heavy breathing and its wave-like laughter. All the voices which call to us on the wind. A hidden fear comes out at moments in the black night.

AND NOW WHO

There are in the falling night—which opens with a key hung from the tree and which grates, sparkles, turns to all the horizons and all the draughts—waste men by reason of their backs worn threadbare with time, who pass against a background of mist that grows fixed.

It drizzles on all the obliterated roads, on the meadows which change place slowly, on the woods to augment the night—nothing is any longer in line.

The black foot-path leads me astray through the thickets; the hedge has no more holes plugged with cinders. The gray flags furled in every corner, those colors lost in the gloomiest of strips, those imaginary countrysides where pass a few cries of night-birds and all of a sudden—too near for one to believe it possible and present—the movement of great beasts. If one is not really lost in the universe and if the aspect of deep reefs is not there reflected.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of M. Jacques Calmy, editor of *Le Radeau*.)

Monny de Boully

Monny de Boully is a young Serbian Jew, who lives in Paris and who writes in French. He has contributed Super-realist texts to La Révolution Surréaliste, *and is now a contributor to a number of young advance-guard reviews. He is in his early twenties.*

THE ENGASTRIMYTH

FOR A. ROLLAND DE RENEVILLE

Back to the startingpoint first gaping worldgaze
The exhumed pulse will not beat again except to mow down
The milestones of an Eternity without a maybe
An Eternity of gleaming stars in the far heavens
An Eternity of devastating whirlwinds
In the brazier of my blood brewed by an expected "Hush!" that is to slay my speech
Anxious shadows shiver on the feverish walls
Of the darkest grottoes of my cranium
Turbulent and hypnotic cloudseas where founder
The Carnivorous Birds
He is free of the Ah's and the Alas'
Widestrewn by the effort of his breath
Insensitive old shoe where the hammer
Doughtily clouts the nail
This lad has never set foot on the joyous orlops
And yet and yet it may be that he's not master
Of his own hesitant and numskull gait
Of all those who have sucked the bitter black
Milk at the breasts of life
Why then should he weep the faces are so calm
In the pretty daguerrotype landscape
And so simplesouled the smile
On the maternal face of the full moon
"Come here young rascal quick you're going to get
A serious punishment to teach you
How to help our cats suckle the butcher's dog
And how to make snails slobber

By tickling their bellies with a blade of grass"
There was a whole gang of rough characters
Of whom I remember only one who came out all right in the end
As a result of methodical floggings and the thirty-six tapers
From the time of his first tooth to the Awkward Age
Of grotesque nicknames that raised him to the rank
Of those divinities who change their skin
With each new changing cycle of rebirth
I shall call LOBSTERMAN
The man who has been transformed into a lobster
In order to feel peacefully rotting within his bones
The flesh that declines to die
Leaving my drowsy head in peace at the end of my body
I followed the Lobsterman through my sleep as a vagabond
Leaves a miserly village behind him
His skeleton stopped near a tree stupefied
At having shot its roots so skyward high
Its branches into the depths of my grieving bosom
"I'm going to turn over" and the Lobsterman
Gnashed his teeth as he made his bed
In the shade of the quivering foliage
Prey to an irresistible desire
To vomit forth his guts
Consciously like an urchin crushing
A fly between his fingers.

Shall I come back one future autumn
To the edge of the marshy bog that I may angle
For unimaginable mudgray fish
And in the ruined ghetto of my native city shall I find
The Spains and the Jerusalems of my concatenated birth
In the hands of God, *A Dieu?*
"Adieu" murmured the sleeper with a sigh of great relief
As if he never more were to be parted
From anything that was.
Impertinent sparrows fought for the crumbs that clung
The woolen garments that he wore
Two-three crows kept hovering overhead
As if uncertain of a carcass
And other birds quite common in those parts
Perched not far from him and at his faintest sleeping stir

Took sudden zigzag flight in all directions
Amid those sombre wings a lustrous plumage
Appeared as does a flash through a rift of cloud
It was a canary that had fled its cage
And which feared death so little that it attacked
The sparrows, the crows and all the other birds without distinction
Unfailing living dart
And soon the canary was the only one that stayed
Beside the sleeper in the Valley of Expiations
Which I shall attain when I have burned over one by one
The provinces of suffering that I have left behind
There would be enough to kill
Every living thing upon the earth
If once the dreamless nightmare the deaf-mute sorrow shut up in that being
Grew strong enough to burst its turtle's shell
As dynamite hoists a cathedral into dust
The Lobsterman was sleeping in the Winged-Valley
Where I shall come when the time shall come to go
Where I shall never never have to go again
Lugubrious courtyards full of broken bricks
With low dropped dwellings in between
Where the old streets are paved with the rude stones
Which generation after generation of soles have dimly rounded
To the enormous shape of old men's heads
Bald heads long hairs with grass on the occiput
The bird from the Canaries lighted on the Lobsterman's breast
And its pitiless beak swung ajar
In a superb and penetrating song
A gripping song ineffably sweet
And odiously melodiously criminal
But the canary ceased singing without arousing
The immutable sleeper from his torpid nap
And then began a monstrous grappling-match,
A stubborn and unequal struggle
Between the bird and the Lobsterman the canary and the Calm
Tak tak tak till nightfall as the beak clashed
Against the impenetrable skeleton
Maddened the canary dizzily descended
To pluck out the eyes
A desperate and vain attempt in spite of all

For all the bird did was to wrench its neck
Against the wall of a stone eyelid.

(*Translated by* S. P. in collaboration with the Author.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *The New Review*.)

Georges Hugnet

Georges Hugnet is the French translator of Gertrude Stein, by whom he has been in turn "translated," and is known to American readers through the pages of Pagany *and* The New Review. *He was born at Paris in 1906. His bibliography includes:* 40 Poésies de Stanislas Boutemez *(illustrations by Max Jacob), 1927;* Le Droit de Varech, *1930; in preparation:* Enfances, *translation by Samuel Putnam and the author. The Gertrude Stein works which Hugnet has translated are* The Making of Americans *and, in collaboration with Virgil Thompson, the* Ten Portraits. *Miss Stein's version of the* Enfances *was published in the Winter, 1931, number of* Pagany. *M. Hugnet also conducts a publishing business, Les Éditions de la Montagne.*

COMMODUS

OR

A FEW SECONDS FROM THE LIFE OF AN EMPEROR

THE CROWD

"It is the Emperor Commodus, it is the Emperor Commodus. . . .
Let the people put on their new shoes
and let Rome and its pigeons tremble on their columns!"

ON THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO ROME

"Across the Roman countryside
insects look at the Emperor.
Here are the runners that go before
his chariot."

THE SCOUTS

"For the Emperor and his friend
we are playing diabolo.

Under our vestments of indigo,
we dance the madness that is his."

THE EMPEROR APPEARS

"I am Commodus, Commodus
Lucius Marcus Aelius Antoninus Aurelius.
Let no one anywhere expect to see
my father's effigy.
The sky shall be my province,
the moon my country-house
and the months of the year
shall be the ten fingers of my hands
and two of my loves."

THE CROWD

"It is the Emperor Commodus
under our columns. . . ."

THE EMPEROR'S SONG

"When the sun is up
in the middle of the circus
I love you, I love you,
little golden lionesses
who bellow at my sword.
And I sleep at the foot of an olive,
my imperial hands deep
in your purple love."

THE CROWD

"Hear the Emperor singing!
Honey is trickling in his head.
He can subdue beasts,
he can subdue us."

FROM THE NEWS OF THE DAY

"Last evening the Emperor
consulted the oracles
to learn who the winner
of the summer regatta would be.
But for him, the birds
and their divine responses
lift the curtains
at the top of the hills.

Tonight, tonight
to give Rome sport
to lull his tedium
he has disemboweled a man.
Commodus will win the regatta."

A YOUNG GIRL IN THE ROMAN SUBURBS

"O Commodus, I hear in the countryside
the divine sob of your words.
You drag your tedium, gentle Commodus,
through the blood of wrestlers
and down the Roman avenues.
I shall be waiting for you after midnight
behind the cypress lane,
we shall sing together the circus song."

THE EMPEROR

"All the cripples of Rome
have disguised themselves as monsters.
I am waiting for them, I am waiting for them
at the corner of my palaces.
Inasmuch as they are ugly
there will be no pleasure in slaying them,
but their blood is as pure
as that of athletes
and will flow down to the Tiber
carrying with it my tedium and its beauty."

THE CROWD ADDRESSES THE EMPEROR

"The people love blood and the circus.
Commodus, what have you done with your purple?
Commodus, Commodus, you do not kill enough.
You suppress the ugly:
you must kill out of love.
Give us your favorites."

THE EMPEROR'S NOSTALGIA

"Paternus, Perennis and Cleander,
O my three-headed pigeon,
I shall kill you then since they ask it.
We shall not drink together again,

we shall not go bathe again together.
Never shall your eye
meet mine
and my hair shall regret the brush of yours.
Your vestments shall remain upon the couches.
I shall kill you this evening
as I say good-night,
O my unhappy pleasures."

THE EMPEROR AFTER THE CRIME

"A new drunkenness
rings in my ears.
Marcia, Marcia beside me
come and see the dawn
and the early dogs
that hunger drives from sleep."

THE EMPEROR'S MEDITATION

"What invulnerable passion
in unquiet hearts
proves pleasure's disenchantment!
The murder-taste in me
changes love to solitude
and by night, my hand somnambulant
dreams of tremendous joys
which Rome cannot offer me."

MARCIA PLANS TO POISON THE EMPEROR

"You do not love me enough
to have the right to kill me
and I am not beautiful enough.
It is Marcia, your concubine,
who speaks to you by your bed.
Commodus, I shall see your naked body
writhing over the stones,
the poison acting and your eyes uprolling,
my love against your bosom."

THE EMPEROR BEFORE THE MEAL

"Rome, dear bee-hive of my sadness,
at the mercy of your landscapes
my imperial limbs ambulate."

THE EMPEROR AFTER THE MEAL

"Good-by, gardens, with your unrefreshing life,
good-by, clothing that my body finds so hard,
good-by, my radiant love. . . .
Marcia, why do you poison me?
My palace grows more and more spacious;
I did not know your love had that power.
Marcia, is it you, is it you
I hear beyond the terrace?"

AN ATHLETE COMES IN AND THE EMPEROR SPEAKS TO HIM

"Dear athlete, O sturdiest
of my tamed beasts,
do you bring me an antidote?
You do not answer, I can see
that death is losing no time.
What is it you conceal beneath your cloak?"

THE ATHLETE THROWS HIMSELF UPON THE EMPEROR AND STABS HIM A NUMBER OF TIMES

"Commodus, Commodus. . . .
I pay you back the silver
they gave me for killing you.
Commodus, Commodus. . . .
How shall I tell you
all that I feel?"

THE ATHLETE FLEES SHOUTING

"Murder pursues me
like pleasure, like pleasure. . . .
Commodus, Commodus. . . ."

THE EMPEROR'S DEATH

Another triumph awaits me.
My chariot is ready.
Good-by, my friends, good-by,
you will take the rear chariot.
Drive to the circus. . . ."

(*Translated by S. P.* in collaboration with the Author.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *The New Review*.)

THE AMERICAN-SURRÉALISTE INFLUENCE

(1926)

It may not be too much of a simplification to state that, America being one of the most fascinatingly unreal portions of a world which the young European, following the War, beheld with new eyes, it was not unnatural that the American theme and the impulse to the discovery of a Super-realism should meet and be, to a degree, amalgamated. The thing, in any event, happened. As far back as 1923, we have seen Joseph Delteil dallying with the idea, in his tale of the Texas sailor boy, "Iphegenia." Perhaps, the two writers in whom it shows most clearly are Blaise Cendrars and Philippe Soupault. The two tales given below were published in 1926–27, originally in the French numbers of the Italian *"900."* The original of Soupault's story will also be found, as a *texte inédit,* in the *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Prose Française* (Kra, 1928).

Blaise Cendrars

Blaise Cendrars is one of the most picturesque figures in French literature of today. He is, above all, a nomad; but he can properly be called neither a globe-trotter nor a tourist. He is intimately acquainted with Europe, including Russia, with the two Americas, and with Siberia. In each country he visits, he lives as a native, rather than as a traveler, making his living often as he goes, as a salesman for one commodity or another or by giving lectures. When in France, he hides away in a little shack down in the country, where he lives alone with his dogs. He has been termed "the loneliest man in the world." He has at least a couple of addresses in Paris and is occasionally to be seen in Montparnasse. He is noted for his bad temper, even with his friends. He is known to American readers for his African Saga, *his* Little Black Stories, *and* Sutter's Gold *and through the recent rendering of his poems by John Dos Passos. His poems are remarkable for a certain arid quality, what the French term* sécheresse, *and all his work has a certain fantasy, novelty and sincerity. He is also interested in the film. His work includes:* Profond aujourd'hui, *1917;* J'ai tué, *1919;* La fin du monde, *1919;*

L'Or, *1925;* Moravagine, *1926;* Dan Yack, *1929;* La Légende de Novogorode, *1909; (published at Moscow);* Séquences, *1912;* Pâques, *1912;* La prose due Transsiberien, *1913;* Le Panama ou les aventures de mes sept oncles, *1918;* Poèmes élastiques, *1919;* Du Monde entier, *1919;* Kodak, *1924. Cendrars was born in Switzerland, in 1887, but has spent very little of his time there. For a study of Cendrars, see:* Blaise Cendrars, par Albert Lepage, lettre-préface de Georges-Charles *(published by Les Ecrivains Réunis, Paris).* John Paul Jones *is a work on which Cendrars has been laboring for a number of years.*

JOHN PAUL JONES

My novel, *John Paul Jones, or Ambition,* is the book which I have carried with me on my travels, the book to be written and not the book to be read.

I have written it during a trip to Brazil, in the forest, on the seashore, in a busy town, on board steamboats and trains, in the midst of East-European immigrants, and above all Germans, who come here to take the place of negroes in this enormous country in process of formation which is being more and more cleared to the north and the west (india-rubber, coffee) and which can yet hold more than a hundred million persons; I have written it as I listened to the discussions of planters, in keeping track of the valuation of lands, while following the dizzying ups-and-downs of the Stock Exchange, while noting down the tales of prospectors, while studying the past and reading the history of conquests, the annals of the Paulist invasion, the marvelous Jesuit legends, never losing sight all the while of the present political and economic crisis, getting men in power to talk, witnessing the formation of the new democratic party, tracing on the map the course of the vagrant revolution in the interior, crossing the deserts of Ceara, the *sertaons* of Bahia, the *planaltino* of Goyaz, the virgin forests of Matto Grosso and the bald mountains of Minas Geraes, drawing imperceptibly near to the coast states and the great modern cities where Americanism is the rage, machinism, futurism and all the "isms" of the international financiers, of the curiae, of the universities and of a newspaper civilization; I have written it while visiting new and gigantic factories, during my stop-overs in coffee—coffee, coffee—plantations, many of which are greater in extent than a department of France,

and where one encounters so thorough-going a hospitality; while inspecting the canal-builders' yards and watching the construction of dikes and the installation of electric turbines, seeing twenty-story skyscrapers springing up in twenty-four hours, going down into the depths of mines, going up in an aeroplane, living with engineers, colonists, negroes, jazz and maxixe orchestras, women, lepers, millionaires, hotel-employes, missionaries, newspapermen, statesmen, revolutionists, young madmen (Carnival, the Processions, Witchcraft), with criminals, positivist officers, positive bankers, two good friends and three dogs, Boche, Kitch and Sandy; I have written it in the midst of all these living things, bestirring myself all the while, trying to do business and make money, giving talks and lectures, and disposing of automobiles, railroad-building-material, aeroplanes, books, Parisian merchandise, fine gowns or pearls,—and collecting all that has to do with negro folklore and the traditions of the South-American Indians.

Which is as much as to say that I have not done much "research," since all I had to do frequently was to transcribe what I saw about me by way of placing John Paul Jones in his true historical environment.

A slight arrangement, and I have made a living book.

If I have not done much research, this does not mean that I have a scorn for documents, which are, first of all, a marvelous source of error and occasion for discussion.

I like theories and men, but I do not like men's prejudices; and I have no time to waste on anyone whom I find importunate or stupidly boring; I do not care a great deal for theories become dogmas, congealed and gone to sleep.

I do not care for peace of mind. I reserve the right to wake everybody and everything up.

I never forget that the past, likewise, is first of all a stirring thing, like today, and that everything which has lived is living still, undergoing changes and permutations, moving and being transformed, and that the truth, like the good old gossip that she is, contradicts herself a hundred times a day.

Scholars, the learned, specialists and especially historians of the study ought to trig out their brains the way women do their bodies and follow the fashions, shortening a little here, taking in a little there, reducing their waist-lines and showing a little more of themselves. How many of them are there whose brain-lobes are as shapely as a nice pair of breasts?

But no, they must bury themselves in the archives, hide behind piles of documents, cramp themselves into texts; but he who has eyes to see can make out between the lines their flat-nosed-hypocrite faces, their sniveling-moralistic profiles, their larva-like bodies.

Since in spite of everything they will crawl in between the lines, nibble away at texts, sting and feed on documents like the worms and the library-rats that they are,—then, why should I not make my appearance wholly hidden behind a document that is at once sportive and gay; and why should I be reproached for having given Historic Truth a wrench or two?

I shall always stick up for Life.
And the only History is Life.
And the only Truth is Life.

What is Historic Truth?
And what is a Document?
A biased or artistic interpretation always.
A spring-board.
For jumping.
Into reality and into life.
To the heart of the subject.

For the Historian as well is first of all a man, and the most objective, the coldest of them is yet a commentator.

Do not talk to me of scientific calm.

The Historian, even when engaged in relating events which took place more than ten thousand years ago, still takes sides, becomes passionate, criticizes, blames, praises, affirms, invents, puts on airs, and is unbearable or ridiculous according as he fancies himself to be the sole guardian of the Truth, that virgin parchment out of which he cuts a false face, in which he hollows out the Document, like a clown with his paltry hoop grimacing and rolling in the dung of the circus-ring (the cleverest among them take a flying leap for their great *Dada: History*).

Do not talk to me of scientific calm.

There are rivalries between schools, and competing methods, the thousand and one always possible interpretations of a single text, in accordance with intellectual capacity, doctrine, traditions of caste and nationality, the prejudices of the age, current political events and—life, your own life and that which rises from the dust of

archives and which goes to your brain to make you lose that beautiful scientific calm of yours;—the life of millions and millions of individuals and of thousands and thousands of human generations which have lived in error and contradictions, and which proceed to trip you up with their poems, their love-affairs, their battles, their sublime civilizations the moment you bend over those heaps of old papers rotting in basements and begin going into ecstasies over that frail leaf and faded handwriting which are all that remain of all the struggles, ambitions and pride, and when you pause to reflect that all this might have been physically wiped out by your opening of the door a moment ago, the conclusion is that all is vanity, a breath of wind, and that you yourselves are still living today in contradictions and in error.

Historic Truth is the point of view from Sirius. Nothing is any longer distinguishable from that height. We must come down, draw near, take things in the bulk. To see. To see from close up. To bend over. To touch with the finger. To discover the human.

Historic Truth is death.

An abstraction.

Of Pedagogy.

All I want by way of documentation is the story of John Paul Jones.

. . . . .

I love this lack of agreement among contemporaries and these contradictions in public opinion on the subject of an individual. I love the inability of historians and of specialists to bring, later, a strong individuality into the picture, and I admire their mode of picking and choosing, of triturating and juggling with certain annoying documents which tend to upset their theories; especially in the case of a national hero such as this one, who must absolutely be brought down to scale, to the scale of academic convention and morality inasmuch as a statue has been erected to him (in 1906). This proves clearly enough that scholars and the learned, exactly like the authors of popular prints and the cloak-and-sword romancers, are incapable of disengaging the human from the superhuman, and that they are all of them impotent when brought up face to face with mankind and with life.

Down with the pedagogues.

A life is something that proves nothing.

The thing is to love life.

A speck, that's all.

I love life.

I love man.

I love this man, John Paul Jones, whom we see in Houdon's bust looking like a present-day American, wholesome, simple, direct, a self-made man, likeable, astonishing, a chap such as I have often met, and who must have smiled very often.

I love his life.

. . . . .

Before they start holding him up as an example, before they erect statues to him, before they place him in the Hall of Fame, before they dress him and gild him, before they stylize him in order to give him a life-like appearance, and before they have a chance to put him among the Illustrious Men of his Nation, before he becomes one of the Historic Dead, a member of the great family of Epitaphed Mummies,—before all this, a man, and above all a great man, a precursor, one of those who have left their foot-prints in blazing a trail for an entire country, a hero,—such a one is first of all a human being, which is to say, a breath of wind, a heart, a pair of lungs, five senses, a brain, reflexes, and a myriad shimmering impressions, of timidity, of ignorance, of impotence and of fear. It is this that I should like to put a finger upon, and that is why I entitle this book a novel, since it contains not so much John Paul Jones' official biography as my own autobiography lent to an historic character.

I have been able to find no other formula in narrating the life of a man, his contradictions, his greatness, his weaknesses, his setbacks, his struggles, the contradictory influences that shaped his destiny, the conjunctions of luck and fatality, his loves, his journeyings and his adventures, his triumphs, his diseases, his exploits, his numberless sidesteps, his solitudes, his audacities, his hesitations, his chances and mischances, his joys and sorrows, in a word, his passions. And if I can find no other formula, it is for the reason that one can relate no other life than his own.

Guaruja, 15th March, 1926.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Philippe Soupault

Philippe Soupault, friend of Aragon, Breton, Tzara and Éluard, was, as we have seen, early associated with the Dada movement; and we have also heard his own account of how he drifted away from it. We have had, as well, a sample or two of his early-Surréaliste collaboration with Breton, in Les Champs magnétiques *and elsewhere. He is both poet and prose-writer. In his poetry, it is the freshness and limpidity of the image that strikes one, and something of the same quality is to be found in the unadorned rhythm of his prose. He was born at Chaville (Seine-et-Oise), in 1897, of middle-class antecedents; and he is one of those who represent the revolt of the young French sons of the bourgeois. His first work, a book of verse,* Aquarium, *was published in 1917. This was followed by three other verse volumes:* Roses des vents, *1920;* L'Invitation au suicide, *1921 and* Westwego, *1922. In 1923 came his first novel,* Le Bon Apôtre, *an embodiment of the after-the-War novelist's formula, which consists in seeing one's hero from the inside, against an external background of frequently weird and rapidly shifting events. A second novel,* A la derive, *was published the same year. In 1924, we have a third novel,* Les frères Durandeau, *and another volume of verse,* Wang-Wang. *Other works are:* Voyage d'Horace Pirouelle, *1924;* En joue!, *1925.*

DEATH OF NICK CARTER

Four o'clock in the morning.

Nick Carter was sleeping with one ear open.

The ringing of the telephone barely awakened him.

He was expecting a call from his right-hand man, Patsy.

"Hello—Nick?"

"367—that's me."

"I've had a look. Nothing much to show for it."

"Shoot!"

"The house opens like an oyster. You have to push with all your might to get in; a heave of the shoulders is no good. In the anteroom, fourteen tables are drawn up alongside one another in the order of height. Upon the first is an orange and a knife, on the second a green feather-duster, on the third a pair of sea-shells, on the fourth a bright new Spanish penny, on the fifth a bi-colored

handkerchief (blue and yellow), on the sixth a pair of scissors, on the eighth there is nothing, on the ninth an oil-lamp, on the tenth a white pink, on the eleventh a rose and a caramel, on the twelfth a glass filled with wine, on the thirteenth an ivory elephant, on the last a dog's-eared calling-card, the card of H. M. the Shah of Persia. At the foot of this large table (nine yards by ten) a bell.

"The half-open door leads to the drawing-room; a fire on the hearth, a pair of gloves on an easy-chair, a jasper cane on the floor in front of a big Dutch-style piece. The drawing-room has the appearance of having been stripped of its furniture. In this enormous room, there is nothing but an arm-chair, a wardrobe, which I have already described, and a little three-legged center-table. On the wall an eighteenth-century picture, which bears the following inscription in the German language: *Wilhelmine, prinzessin von Preussen spätere markgräfin von Bayreuth.* One of the eyes has been poked out. On the wall, opposite the picture, a pink poster advertising the wonderful results from the use of a certain beauty-preparation. A seven-branch candelabrum with candles unevenly consumed stands on the chimney-piece. A glass above the fireplace has the following chalk inscription: *M. Bart. 7H ½ to see.* The adjoining room to the left of the door is a bath-room. There is another bath-room to the right, but a good deal larger one. In the center of the spacious drawing-room is a grand-piano. In order to get at the stairway, I had to remove a big leather arm-chair. The stairway is unimpressive, except for the fact that its steps are painted in the hues of the rainbow. The first step is carmine-red, the second vermilion-red, and so on. A watering-pot on the landing. I could make out three doors painted white and bearing different numbers: 18; 322; 4. In room No. 18 a young woman was lying upon a state-bed. She held a flower in her right hand as she slept, a lipstick in her left, and I was not able to wake her. The room was very simply furnished, like a room in a third-class hotel.

"Room 322, which corresponds to the drawing-room, is an exact reproduction of the Louis XIV. room in the palais de Versailles. Only, the wax image of the king is replaced by an alarm-clock. In room No. 4, two black-clad men, a catalpa in their button-holes, were playing chess. These two men were dead. At least, they were no longer breathing. I shut the door and clambered up to the attic. It is an enormous room with flowers, a big table and a little table. On the floor there was a telephone; what struck me the first thing and worried me a little (I was a bit scared, Nick, I don't mind

telling you) was an ordinary ash-tray where a cigarette was still smoking. The bed was not made; I put my hand on it, and it was still warm. Instinctively, I grabbed my revolver and made the rounds of the attic; there was no one there. There was a hat that had been tossed over into a corner. It was a beige derby which had been bought at Monsieur Gelot's, hatter to the late King Edward VII., in the place Vendôme.

"It was now almost completely dark, and I lighted my electric lamp as I crept down stairs; I had to visit the cellar yet. I couldn't find the entry-way. It had undoubtedly been walled up, but behind the wall I could hear some one speaking, over the telephone; I glued my ear to the wall and listened. It was no use. I left the house, but the air-holes were plugged up. So, I crouched down in the garden under a tree, like some one satisfying a need of nature, and proceeded to wait for the inmate, thinking that he would be obliged to light a lamp or draw the shutters. I waited two hours. The garden is a very ordinary affair, as I've already told you. Clinging-vines rambling over the house and the wall, water-lilies floating in a little pool. The moonlight soon ran me out, and I had to hide in a small thicket. There was only the smoke from the chimney, now lit up by the moon, puffing out and trailing away. Pedestrians passed the house. One of them lighted a cigarette and went off whistling; autos occasionally glided along the quai. Then there was silence once more.

"In the distance I could see a storm creeping up, like a beast. Lightning-flashes rent the night, as I still waited for the rain and for the man whom I had just heard telephoning to put in an appearance. A postman leaped from his bicycle and threw a letter into the box at the front-door.

"The garden was silent, but there were nearby sounds that reached my ear. A gramophone was imitating Caruso. Finally, the night came down and sleep fell over all. About an hour. I was unable to tell the time by my watch, but an hour went by in that silence.

"All of a sudden, I heard some one singing. The voice was magnificent, almost affectionate, almost raucous.

"That voice, benumbed and vengeful, that trailing voice which came from behind the wall, now attacked the heights, and a more distant note caused a flower clinging to the stones to tremble. It was either the wind or a moonbeam. A head appeared. It was a very black head with a pair of eyes that shone like fish-eyes and with a mouth-shaped heart. A few seconds passed. The silence sank

to a level with the earth and then a hand holding a lighted lantern rose serpent-like.

"In the little mustached garden, the grass was quivering perhaps from fear. The hand shook the lantern and in spite of the moonlight its gleam was reflected in the pool. It almost seemed that the wavering character of that gleam was a signal.

"A rain-drop silenced a bird dismayed by the gleam. The storm passed. I could hear thunder in the west.

"The man grew taller. He leaped into the garden, went to get the letter in the box and came back. It was a very large negro, in a dress-coat and white gloves. I could hear his footfalls; then they stopped. I waited for him to appear again, but there was no use waiting. Revolver in hand, I now left the garden, hoping to have a sight of him, but there was no longer anyone on the quay.

"I telephoned you from the first café that I came to. I forgot to mention that on the quay I picked up an envelope. A small blue envelope; it didn't strike me as being important. It bore the following address: *Proprietor, No. 2, avenue des Tilleuls.* It was dated day before yesterday and bore the seal of P—— which is, I believe, a city in the west of France.

"Hello! Hello! Get here just as fast as you can."

II

Near a city in the West of France, one notices, coming in on the train, a large austere-looking house to the right. This huge building might at first glance be taken for a convent.

When one comes up close to this gray-green house, one perceives that the windows are protected by iron-gratings, which are not quite so gloomy in appearance, however, as the bars on prison windows. Certain of the windows, indeed, are wreathed with climbing plants, clematis or bindweed. This tall building is disconcertingly clean, hygienically clean. The road which runs around it is macadamized. One glides rather than walks along its muffled pavement. The slate roofs are topped with lightning-rods. The main gate is of wrought iron.

The grounds round about are level and planted with sickly little trees, like stakes stuck in the ground with a few leaves at the top. Tall houses bristle up at odd intervals over the rambling estate, strewn with papers which the wind blows and tumbles about, with

tin-cans and old rags, while a short, dried-up, sparse and grayish grass grows here and there at random.

This elongated house is very well known to the countryside. They refer to it proudly as the Clinic; for the reason that certain illustrious personages were interned here, and there was quite a scandal in the papers about it at one time.

In reality, it is the most ordinary sort of madhouse, but it is possessed of a weird grandeur of its own, like that of clock-towers and viaducts.

On the inside, the management has done all it can to assure silence. Thick rugs cover the floors; layers of cork line the walls; and all the double-doors and tiny windows are protected by wind-screens.

It is almost impossible, inside this house, to hear the whistle of trains going by a few hundred yards away. Rows of trees cut off wind and sound.

When one comes out again and hears all the noise and shouts, his ears, grown accustomed to silence, fairly buzz.

It is then that the great mystery makes its appearance, clad according to season in black or in white. When the passer-by, tired from a heavy day's work, finds himself in these parts, he sometimes hears a shrieking which is like that of blind birds. He at once imagines atrocious crimes or experiments, bloody deeds, but his fear increases when, listening intently, he hears these screams being transformed into a long laugh, a contagious laugh. He laughs in turn, trembling with fright. He endeavors to flee, but soon comes up short at the sound of some one blowing a whistle, the sound of sobs and a great red laugh which, rebounding about him, lays hold of him and shakes him until he is forced to hold his sides.

The inmates, it appears, are playing football.

The belated passer-by gets up his courage at last and goes off opening his umbrella, for the reason that the black sky has just burst. Another time, a child from the neighborhood was having a good time playing Indian on these rambling grounds. He was pursuing a shadow and shouting "Bang! bang! bang!" aiming at an invisible enemy. He was galloping about like those small animals which are sometimes known as chamois. Intoxicated with his foreseen victory, he kept on running. He ran into a stone, but since no one was present he did not cry. All he did was to pick himself up, and it was then he caught sight, through the bars of a window, of

a bearded face and a pair of eyes from which the tears were streaming. He ran away and went to bed when bedtime came.

But during the night he dreamed of that face, those weeping eyes, and talked about his adventure.

Mystery like a bird swooping down on its prey spread its shadow over the little town. The Clinic was suddenly painted in crimson-red. Fear came flying in the wake of the mystery. The inhabitants moved away from that long row of buildings and their families, on Sundays or holidays, no longer went walking in that vicinity. They accordingly avoided speaking of the distant house.

It became the sub-prefect's duty one day to make a thorough inspection of this house from top to bottom. And the Saturday following, at the Prefecture ball, he told about his visit.

The Superintendent is a man of about fifty, very big and very strong. He has a keen way of looking at you from behind those spectacles of his. He was very careful to explain his system to me and to prove to me that it was all right, but I have to admit that I understood almost nothing of what he said. He took me everywhere. The room where he questions the patients is quite remarkable. On the wall there are all sorts of pictures and between each canvas a number painted up in red. In front of the window with its face looking out is an old life-sized statue; it looked to me like an hermaphrodite. I couldn't understand why the Superintendent had collected so many watches and clocks of all kinds. I am sorry that I did not have time to count them, but it is no exaggeration to say that there were at least thirty or forty. And they made such a racket that I felt as if I were on the inside of a sewing-machine."

The beautiful ladies who listened to the young and handsome sub-prefect smiled. The description of this strange room amused them so much that they forgot all about dancing. The sub-prefect, flushed with his success, went on:

"The Superintendent showed me a few 'cells.' There are a great many nice rooms, luxuriously furnished, and on the floor of each you will see a number of high-grade rugs. The silence in these rooms was so absolute that I thought time had come to a standstill; you can imagine what a contrast it was.

"Thanks to a certain mysterious and complicated apparatus, a sort of periscope or arrangement of mirrors, I don't know just what, I had a look at some of the inmates who did not know that they were being observed, and they seemed to me quite calm. One of them struck me especially. He was a sort of Hercules who was

amusing himself by stitching hems. I asked the Superintendent who this man was.

" 'I can't tell you his name, a professional secret,' the Superintendent replied, 'but I can tell you one thing, and that is the fact that, for a number of months, he was the idol of the sporting fraternity; he's a very famous boxer.'

"We saw other patients who were all very nicely behaved. There was one marvelously beautiful woman."

The ladies' thoughts were far away. Not to carry the thing too far, the sub-prefect invited one of them to dance.

At supper, a young lady at the sub-prefect's right, by way of making conversation and breaking the silence, asked him: "What sort of treatment do they give the patients?"

"The Superintendent," he replied, "has an idea of his own about that, quite an original idea. He has his patients go in for sports. He obliges them to play tennis, push-ball and football. The nurses take part in these amusements. It seems they enjoy it immensely. They are as happy as children, the Superintendent told me. They laugh and laugh, and most of them try to cheat."

The sub-prefect was silent as they brought on the champagne.

The ladies who had heard him proceeded to relate the story in their turn, adding exciting details of their own.

Then, when every one's curiosity had been satisfied, they went on to talk about something else; but the Clinic had its legend.

One spring day, a fashionable young man was to be seen getting off the train, a camera slung over his shoulder; he was an English tourist. He took up his quarters in the hôtel de la Poste, and for several days after made excursions about the neighborhood. He asked questions of the shop-keepers and of the waiters in the cafés. He seemed to be particularly interested in the Clinic. The barber, who was an old gossip, promptly gave him all the information he wanted, and one fine day, under pretense of desiring more accurate details, the young man asked the Superintendent for an interview. One of his relatives, he wrote, had a nervous affection and would like to try this method. When he was in the Superintendent's office, he asked the Doctor to close all the doors and to ask the staff not to disturb them for some little time. The Doctor was familiar with such requests on the part of patients. He reassured the young man with the promise that no one would come to interrupt them.

"You undoubtedly know the great American detective, Nick Carter?"

"Yes, indeed," said the Doctor.

"Well, I'm one of his right-hand men, and I'd like to start an inquiry without attracting any attention. I must request secrecy on your part. You formerly had a colored attendant here, a negro, by the name of Albert Martel?"

"Quite right."

"Can you give me any information about the fellow?"

"He was a good nurse, and I was very well satisfied with him. In physical strength he was quite out of the ordinary, and he was of great use to us in 'subduing' our patients, especially those that are what we call excitable,—the fantastic overbearing ones who resent doing what they are told.

"Albert Martel was not with us long, one or two months, I believe. Both the management and the personnel, I must say, regretted his leaving. The attendants, the concierge, the gardeners often speak of him still. He was very generous and liked to make little gifts to his fellow nurses, to children, and even to the patients themselves."

"Have you ever seen him since?"

"Yes, once. He came up in an automobile one evening, a very handsome car incidentally. He told his friends that he was a chauffeur now, but he was dressed like a gentleman."

"When was that?"

"About three weeks ago."

Patsy Murphy thanked the Doctor and left. He telephoned that same evening to his employer, who was warm in his congratulations. Nick Carter appeared to be delighted with the outcome of this little investigation, which after all had not caused Patsy a great deal of trouble.

"Keep on questioning the employes at the Clinic, try to discover a friend of Martel's and get into his confidence. Chick and I will keep on the trail."

Patsy, in the course of the days that followed, did his best to strike up an acquaintance with the attendants, but they would have nothing to do with him. He thereupon made up his mind to leave the country, and was ostentatious about saying good-by to the friends he had made in the little town. He even went to say good-by to the Doctor.

The same evening that he left, a man of about forty leaped from the train and had himself driven at once to the Clinic. It was the new nurse whom they had been expecting for several days.

III

A couple of weeks after the arrival of the new nurse, who was put in charge of the second floor, a long American auto drew up in the courtyard of the Clinic. It was mid-August, and the heat was overwhelming. The driver, a negro, left his car in front of the door and forgot to shut off the motor. He grasped the concierge's hand and, accompanied by the son, entered the house.

A few seconds after, a second-story window opened, then shut, opened, then shut once more.

It was not long before a pair of tramps came and sat down on the slope against the wall and began eating and drinking. They seemed to be watching the house with a good deal of attention.

The one who had come in the automobile went in to pay his respects to the Superintendent of the Clinic and to shake hands with the attendants. The patients started dressing for their daily football practice.

"Who is that chap there?" inquired the one who was known to the nurses as Albert, when he caught sight of the second-floor nurse.

"A new one."

Albert looked the newcomer over, then broke into a smile.

The patients seemed particularly gay. One of them kept repeating: "The sun is shining, shining," in a sing-song voice, then stopped and began laughing.

The game soon started. Albert was given permission to play. It was a few seconds after the beginning of the second half that a mix-up occurred and the theatrics took place.

Albert in running fell and pulled down the new nurse with him. As he did so, a cry escaped him, a shrill cry, the cry of a wounded man. He raised his hand red with blood. Some of the patients thereupon began shrieking and hurled themselves upon the grappled players. The Hercules who did hem-stitching struck out on all sides, with great blows of his fist. Terrified, the attendant in charge drew a revolver. Two vagabonds scaled the wall, revolver in hand.

The patients were laughing and shrieking, and some rushed toward the newcomers, who opened fire. When the combatants could be separated, five were lying on the floor seriously wounded.

The nurse in charge had been strangled.

Albert Martel, the former employe, had disappeared. In the excite-

ment of the moment, undoubtedly, he had made for his auto and slipped away.

The two vagabonds had received a number of bullets in the head. They died a few hours later without regaining consciousness. When they went to lay out the dead, it was discovered that the head-nurse and the tramps alike wore wigs.

It was then that they recognized Nick Carter and his two trusties, his brother, Chick, and Patsy Murphy.

IV

Along about seven o'clock in the evening, they were shouting an extra on the boulevards:

DEATH OF NICK CARTER

A negro with a bandaged hand bought a newspaper and gave the newsboy a hundred-franc note.

"Keep the change," he said.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

CREATIONISM IN FRANCE

(REVOLT AGAINST REALISM AND SUPER-REALISM)

Vincent Huidobro

Vincent Huidobro, a Chilean by origin, now lives in Paris and writes and publishes books in French and Spanish, from Paris and Madrid, and is soon to be known to the English-reading world through the medium of translations. As far back as 1912, before leaving Chile, Huidobro had begun elaborating a doctrine of poetic "Creationism," of which he gives us something of a history in his essay, Le Creationisme, *in his* Manifestes, *published at Paris in 1925. Writing in the Chilean review,* Musa Joven, *Huidobro had said: "The reign of literature is at an end. The twentieth century shall witness the beginning of the reign of poetry in the true sense of the word, that is, creation, as the Greeks called it, although they*

never succeeded in living up to their definition." Poetry, for Huidobro, is "the act of creation." He is against poetry that is "wrapped around" things. "The thing created against the thing sung." . . . "A poem is a poem, just as an orange is an orange and not an apple." . . . "It (the poem) is not realistic, but it becomes reality." Huidobro is opposed to the Surréaliste theory of "pure psychic automatism," "dream-writing," etc.; he is for the Superconscious as against the Subconscious or the Unconscious (see the first essay in his Manifestes). *Coming to Paris early in the post-War era, Huidobro had a ponderable influence upon the French* jeunes. *A number of his works have been published in French; in addition to his* Manifestes, *there are his* Saisons Choisies, *1921; his* Tous à coup, *1925, his* Automne Regulier, *1925, etc. He also published a little magazine (really a leaflet) entitled* Creation, *from the February, 1924, number of which the "Manifest Maybe" below is taken. In May-June, 1922, Huidobro had an "Exhibit of Poems" at La Galerie G. L. Manuel Frères in Paris, staged in the manner of a painting exhibition, with a foreword by Maurice Raynal. Among the critical tributes in the catalogue was one by Mr. Matthew Josephson, then a member of the Paris-American colony. Josephson wrote: "Huidobro with the giant arms of his muse links new America with old Europe and ultimate France. Out of the immortal union of imagination and desire in his pregnant brain god-like sprang his progeny* creation. *Youthful father! His will propagates itself in the urge to create which he has precipitated. His height is but 174 centimeters. Is not the dance a manifestation of the will to create, to go backward, to go forward, sidewise, up and down, so it creates? Do the wave and quiver of his verses not dance from his oblique eye? And is the Tour Eiffel?" Huidobro's earlier bibliography includes:* Adan; Pagodas Ocultes; Espejo de Agua (Miroir d'Eau); Horizon Carré; Poemas Articos (Poèmes Articos); Ecuatorial (Equatorial); Hallalai; *and* Tour Eiffel.

SONG OF THE EGG AND THE INFINITE

The city flees in a gallop of words
It fears
Pincers of the tree and
Hands of the night
The soul takes flight with the body hitched behind
The soul lined with feathers and transparent comets
When the tongue's treadle imitates the sea
And a bird flies between the banks of memory
Because it has a child that has lost its memory

An ocean of children for a child
A mountain of birds for a bird
A river of tears for a tear
A heaven of stars for a star

Then into each hour of the day there falls a different egg
Falls an egg of light and the light of an egg
A white egg
A blue egg
A green egg
A red egg
A glad egg
A sad egg
A black egg
A yellow egg
An egg egg
They drop one by one from the quivering rainbow
From the cocorico rainbow at each kikiriki
And the eggs scream like flowers
And weep like flowers
When one steps on the feet of flowers

The eggs have flowered
The flowers have hatched
In the heat of attentive glances

An egg breaks and there is the sun
The sun forever with its calories and its diamonds
What is that light of yours and what can it be
What a pretty landscape
That landscape with hairs on its chest
My head rolls on the wheels of its ears
To the depths of the ages
It becomes golden-age gold
Iron-age iron
Stone-age stone
And one shoots it into the infinite with a sling
What a pretty landscape

The infinite emerges from its egg and lays another egg
And after it another egg
And farther off another egg
A procession of eggs
An egg-road
Milky ways of eggs

That is lovely as an orange that opens its doors
As a butterfly that becomes a satellite
There was an egg standing on the shore of the sea
An egg listening to the sound of the sea

An egg that held the sea and the sound of the sea
And which wanted to go back into the belly of its rainbow
Or play with a million eggs singing in the silent spheres
We have seen an egg as flat as an egg on a platter
As an eye on a platter
As a flat form on a plat-form
An egg dancing above the storm
Amid the slippery holes of shipwrecks

Then all eggs turn pale
There has been a sky-quake
All the eggs are broken
And all eyes are closed

1923.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *The New Review*.)

MANIFEST MAYBE

No real route and a poetry sceptic of itself.

What then? Keep on hunting always.

In dispersed tremblings my nerves without guitar and without restlessness, the thing thus conceived far from the poem, to filch the snow from the Pole and the pipe from the sailor.

A few days later I became conscious of the fact that the Pole was a stickpin for my necktie.

And the Explorers?

They had become poets and were singing upright on the well-versed waves.

And the Poets?

They had become explorers and were looking for crystals in the throats of nightingales.

That is why Poet equals Globe-trotter without an active trade, and Globe-trotter equals Poet without a passive trade.

It is essential above all to sing or simply speak without obligatory equivocation, but a few disciplined waves.

No fictitious elevation, only the true which is organic. Leave the sky to astronomers, cells to chemists.

The poet is not always an interchangeable telescope, and if the star slips to the eye on the inside of the tube, it is not by means of a lift, but rather of an imaginative glass.

Nothing of the machine nor of modernity in itself. No Gulf Streams or cocktails, for the Gulf Stream and cocktails have become more of a machine than a locomotive or a diving-suit, and more modern than New York and the catalogues.

Milan . . . naïve city, tired virgin of the Alps, virgin all the same.

AND THE GREAT ENEMY OF THE POEM IS POETRY

And so I say unto you, look elsewhere, far from the machine and from the dawn, as far from New York as from Byzantium.

Do not inject poetry into that which is poetry already without any of your help. Honey on honey is sickening.

Leave to dry in the sun the smoke of factories and good-by handkerchiefs.

Put on your shoes in the moonlight and afterwards we'll have a little talk, and whatever you do, don't forget that Vesuvius, in spite of Futurism, reeks with Gounod.

And the unforeseen?

Even though it very well may be something that comes with the impartiality of a gesture born of chance and not willed, it ought to be banished, for it is too near to instinct which is more animal than it is human.

Chance is good when the dice comes up five aces or at least a four of queens. Aside from that, it ought to be excluded.

No poem that is a chance-shot; there's no billiard-cloth on the poet's table.

If the best poem is the one composed in the throat, it is for the reason that the throat is half-way between the heart and the brain.

Create poetry, but do not wrap it around things. Invent it.

The poet should no longer be the implement of nature, but he should make of nature his implement. There is all the difference from the old schools.

And now let him bring you a new thing, altogether simple in its essence, independent of every other external phenomenon, a human creation, very pure and evolved by the brain with the patience of an oyster.

Is it a poem, or something quite different?

It makes little difference.

It makes little difference whether the creature be a boy or a girl, whether it be lawyer, engineer or biologist, providing that it *is*.

It lives a troubled existence, even while remaining very calm underneath.

It may not be the poem to which we are accustomed, but in any event it *is*.

Thus, first effect of the poem, transfiguration of our daily Christ, a naïve turning-upside-down, wide eyes open on the brink of words that flow away, the brain comes down to the chest and the heart goes to the head, while remaining all the while heart and brain with their essential faculties, in short, total revolution. The earth turns backward, the sun comes up in the west.

Where are you?

Where am I?

The cardinal points are lost in the shuffle, like the four aces in a card-game.

Afterwards, one loves or one refuses, but illusion has comfortable

chairs, boredom swings into an easy gait, and the heart is overturned like a bottle.

(Love or refusal have no importance for the true poet, for he knows that the world travels from right to left and men from left to right. That is the law of equilibrium.)

It is my hand, then, which has guided you, which has shown you the longed-for landscapes, and which has caused a rivulet to gush from an almond-tree without giving the latter a spear-thrust in the ribs.

And when the dromedaries of your imagination would have scattered, I have halted them on the spot, better than a robber in the desert.

No indecisive excursions!

Your money or your life.

That is plain, it is clear. No personal interpretation.

Money does not mean your heart nor life your eyes.

Money is money and life is life.

Each verse is the point of a closed angle, not the intersection of an angle open to all the winds of heaven.

The poem, as we see it here, is not realistic, but human.

It is not realistic, but it becomes reality.

A cosmic reality with an atmosphere of its own and with, assuredly, its own land and sea, such as all self-respecting worlds have.

One is not to look in these poems for the memory of things seen, nor for the possibility of seeing others.

A poem is a poem, just as an orange is an orange and not an apple.

You will not find there things which pre-exist or a direct contact with the objects of the external world.

The poet is no longer to imitate nature, for he does not take to himself the right of plagiarizing God.

You will find there what you have never seen elsewhere: the poem. A creation of man.

And of all human forces, that which interests us most is creative force.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

(*From* AUTOMATISM TO ACTION)

1926

It was about the beginning of the year 1926 that the sense of the dissociated personality and of the essential automatism of the individual and of human life appears to have become most intense; and it is at this time (for example, the Cocteau-Maritain correspondence) that the search for an "evasion" or "escape" became most pronounced. It was a time admirably suited to an *examen de conscience,* and M. André Berge, who was then editing *Les Cahiers du Mois,* proceeded to stage one in the pages of his magazine; see the combined number 21/22, for the spring of 1926. As stated in the General Introduction, this *"enquête"* remains one of the historic after-War documents. It is a document remarkable above all for two things: for the sincerity and degree of spiritual intensity manifested; and for the almost universal contempt displayed for what is commonly known as "literature"—it was a case of "literature" versus "life," and the ballot was almost unanimously in favor of the latter. The response of M. Philippe P. Datz given below is as typical as any. There were others, however, who outlined or endeavored to outline, a more positive stand or course. Among these was M. Ramon Fernandez, who contributed to the number his paper on "The Humanism of Action" (given below). Meanwhile, the state of mind that provoked the symposium is well depicted by Drieu La Rochelle's article, which was published in *La Revue Européenne* for January, 1926.

Pierre Drieu La Rochelle

Pierre Drieu La Rochelle will perhaps be remembered by historians of the after-War decade as the author of Le Jeune Européen *(1927), which is by way of being not merely a thorough-going examination of conscience, but also a thorough-going examination of the post-bellum world. He has, however, written other books*

which will likewise stand. The late Maurice Barrès considered his verse volume Interrogation *(1917) as the greatest book that had come out of the War. There is* État-Civil *(1921), which represents the soul-gropings of a young French bourgeois. There is* Mesure de la France *(1923), which is an attempt on the part of the writer to strike* "le bilan de la France," *or the "balance-sheet" of his own country, morally and politically speaking. And finally, there is* Plainte contre inconnu *(1924), a series of portraits of the younger generation (it is in this volume that* La Valise vide, *with Jacques Rigaut for the real-life model, will be found).*

A "Norman of Paris" and educated by priests in his youth, Drieu La Rochelle has always displayed more or less of a political-social bent. He is a former friend of Raymond Lefèvre, one-time hope of the French Communist party, who disappeared upon his return from a trip to Russia; and he has been not a little influenced by this friendship. He wavered for a time between French Communism and the Action Française. In his much discussed Mesure de la France, *he reveals what has been seen as a new political direction, a new call of the West. To tell the truth, he has wavered in turn between Communism, the Action Française, Dadaism, Cocteau, the* Nouvelle Revue Française *group, etc. But this, in his case, is to be taken as a sign of intellectual vitality. He is regarded by his elders as one of the serious minds of France, one of the minds of tomorrow.*

Drieu La Rochelle was twenty when the War came. The War for him was a "Season in Hell," and he emerged with Rimbaud as his god. He has also been greatly influenced, particularly in his poetry, by the Catholicism of Claudel—see, especially, his Fond de Cantine *(1920).*

As a novelist, Drieu La Rochelle has handled the modern Don Juan theme, along with the new manners of the bourgeoisie, in his L'Homme couvert de femmes *(1925). His* Une femme à sa fenetre *("A Woman at Her Window") has been done into English. "The Automaton," given below, was published in* La Revue Européenne *for January, 1926.*

Finally, Drieu La Rochelle is a writer with whom spiritual intensity is more important than style. He himself will aver that he has not yet been able to produce "a whole book," but only "fragments splintered from my soul."

THE AUTOMATON

I eat, I drink.

I drink again. Alcohol puffs me up, I am a big balloon, full of myself. Something blazes, soon it will turn to smoke and asphyxiate me.

I sneeze. I would expel through my nostrils a populace of visionaries.

Let's try love again. Woman is a presence that one cannot prove: I see myself alone, I suspend a gesture that is becoming shameful.

I go to sleep. But dreams draw me back at high speed into the past.

I arise, I wash. Once more, I am in front of my glass, balancing my weight, as incomprehensible as God, juggler of stars.

. . . . .

I go out of my house, I leave myself. I go into a cinema.

Men between four walls. They come together to dream. The screen is the wall of an aquarium against which this nostalgic fish knocks. Beyond is freedom.

But no, it is the past. One looks at a film as at his youth. Seated in the lap of darkness, they sift their daily: loves, burials. Cowards, they dare not kill and burn except in dreams.

. . . . .

As I walk along a beach, I still have this sensation: the sea is opening under my feet like a trap-door, the shore is the brink of this world. I would take advantage of the occasion. What a jump! I fall nowhere.

. . . . .

When night, streaming with crime and rouge, comes, woman is born. To manufacture this plaything of an evening, they have been bestirring themselves since morning. The manicurist and the chiropodist have polished the horn.

. . . . .

See New York and die. "Hello! give me the antipodes. Fill up our duty to the brim. Hello! Sydney, Mr. Brandbury! Did you have a good night? It looks like a charming evening in Paris. And your sheep? That terrible conflagration in the cinéma des Batignolles,—

can you do anything to put it out? All right, so much the better. Remember me to Mrs. Brandbury."

Every week, I meet once more that galloping cavalier who does not advance a step, like the postman at the street-corner.

. . . . . .

Rid of the sun, the city rejoices in its own light. One can look at himself at last. I go down into the street. Still looking for genius and love, I scrutinize the faces of millions of passers-by. Look at me as I look at you.

. . . . . .

An unknown aeroplane had abducted me, with a few comrades, out of the zone of terrestrial attraction, whisking us to an undefinable place. There, we had forgotten a few habits. We made excursions round about and had a glimpse of stirring arts and manners. But we went on quickly. If we had stayed, we should soon have forgotten our globular fatherland.

. . . . . .

About six o'clock in the evening, business and the banker stop. The work will go on of its own accord until tomorrow morning. During the white sleep of the day, they have bestowed from time to time that little push of the thumb which is necessary to keep the wheels turning. After thousands of years, we shall rejoice in an acquired speed.

. . . . . .

There is but the thickness of a glass. The treasures of showcases are offered to all. All are one in the fraternity of wealth. Moreover, it is vain to have built walls around windows; there is no chance to hide anything.

. . . . . .

Men and women meet of an evening, to eat. In the theatres they think. They eat again, they dance, they drink. And then at last the men and women find themselves face to face. The sexes still clash here and there. This is followed by a great sound of water. The women drown captains, lovers, saints, painters, assassins, the builders of houses. Look at the city buried beneath the waves. Already men are sleeping on their bellies.

. . . . . .

Secretaries, deaf-mutes, bring to the owner of newspapers, from the four points of the compass, that which man has done during the day. Connected by private wire with the whole world. O catholic sovereignty. Look at him, head covered with his antennae. He rubs his hands and gets everything ready. He thinks what his concierge will be thinking. From hour to hour, thought seizes the event. But no, newspapers are printed in advance, and everything happens as it is written.

. . . . .

I surprise upon the wall an entwined couple. From wall to wall, I follow them all the way to the *Frivolités Saxonnes*. I enter this music-box. The couple is there, right enough, on all the walls of the town. The musicians, on their shoulders, in the darkness, support them. But the couple, kisses sticky with rouge, die. Every evening they die. From weariness.

. . . . . .

Perched in the vault of the circus, amid celestial shadows, I look on at the boxing-match. Below, upon the platform, two little fellows are pounding each other. The crowd, massive and sombre, envelops them. The projectors, whose light cruelly holds this diminutive drama, are the twenty eyes of a monstrous nocturnal scientist. The tremendous and lascivious crowd bends over its microscope. Its blood grows warm, it sees two armies.

. . . . . .

It is a fine thing to see gentlemen in elevators. They are going down into the coal mines. They have white gloves. Human dignity here attains its highest expression.

. . . . . .

A man wanted to die. He was near a river and jumped in. Surprised at finding himself in the water, he opened his mouth. He died as a result.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Philippe P. Datz

Philippe P. Datz is a young writer of the Cahiers du Mois *group. He has not been much heard from in the last two or three years.*

AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE[1]

Reason for being:—none whatever! A first throw as spontaneous as it is puerile.

After a period of reflection, I add: Maybe there is one, but I do not know what it is. I bump into the divine. Despair? I am always gay. Despair, anguish: you don't know what a good time I have. It is not a question of contradiction, but of agreement.

My reason: Everything is perfectly useless. } at one
My love: Everything is worth trying. } and the same time.

I insist: NO DISCOURAGEMENT. If I expect nothing, I hope for everything. I am an optimistic pessimist. I admit only action. (Understood, of course, that it's not a question of will, that poor little human motor.) IMAGINATION, with it you can climb to the stars. For my part, I have never done what I have willed, but always what I have desired. Simple question of love. My position appears to me fixed. I accept literature only as a gesture, and as a sounding-box.

This gesture, under the present circumstances of my life, is not necessary. I am speaking not of money, but of equilibrium. Otherwise, I should fall. I write when I feel the need of expressing myself. That happens rather rarely,—in periods when I am skidding. A beating back of the enemy. The repercussion will be found in my scribblings; you can judge from them.

I moreover feel that literature, or art in general, is but an expression of sensuality, and I am inclined to agree with Gourmont (I quote from memory): "If you do not feel the same pleasure in handling ideas that you do in touching a piece of fine cloth or in caressing a shoulder, better leave ideas alone." By a logical deduction

[1] Title supplied.

from what has gone before, I must conclude: literature is but an amorous gesture.

Perhaps? I do not care for formulas which limit the intelligence. This one does not satisfy me any more than others, for the reason that it overlooks the publication of the work, which is absolutely indispensable. A public is a need for an artist. Without a public, no artist. Naturally, for want of better in the case of certain artists, there is such a thing as an auto-public.

So far as the public is concerned, I must confess that the great tenors leave me cold, whether it is a case of Racine or of Rimbaud, I am interested only in "miss-fire" books. The others are works that are "placed." I realize that this classification is quite arbitrary; I merely employ it for my personal use.

In the case of the "miss-fire" books, first of all, I see the defects, and I am annoyed by them to the point of closing the book. And yet, despite the imperfection of their work, these authors strike up in me some indefinable correspondence that stirs me deeply. I cannot explain it; I am simply aware of it. Perfection is but exaggerated cleverness, and it irritates me.

My thought drifts. No use to be precise, to explain, or to expand, since it is only a question of tendencies. It is for the reader to find his direction.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *Les Cahiers du Mois.*)

Ramon Fernandez

Ramon Fernandez, of Spanish-American antecedents, is now one of the better known of the young French critics, and may be taken as an outstanding representative of young French Humanism. His work has appeared in La Nouvelle Revue Française *and other reviews, and is known to the English and American reader through the pages of* The Criterion *and* The Symposium; *for M. Fernandez appears to be on the road to achieving something of an international reputation. His important article on* Proust et les intermittences du cœur *has been spoken of in the General Introduction to this work.*

THE HUMANISM OF ACTION

When two races meet in an individual,—how ironic the word is! —the conflicts of the latter's sensitivity are less painful to him than are the contrasts of his imagination. We are sufficiently faithful to our environment; our perceptions are responses, more or less imitations. But as soon as one has the leisure for imagining, the questions create the responses, with the inner sensibility—that witches' caldron of phantasms—reshaping the world in its own manner, or with the event, too short for the mind's needs, prolonging itself in all its possibilities. It is then that the unutilized instincts of the other race lay hold of us, and we conceive in imagination what we do not have room for living out in life. At least, this is the manner in which I would explain a certain tragic imagination at the back of the infinite, which is hostile to my intentions, and which hands me over to a hundred demons the moment I lose contact with the present. Demons without passports, without civil status, which yet the police are unable to expel, there being no bureau of exorcism in the foreign branch of the service. If some day I tell the story of how a young Spanish-American became acclimated to Europe, it will be easier then to understand what I am trying to say: how out of a constant superposition of images a distinct and clear-cut passion is born, and a dramatic feeling for wisdom.

I should apologize for too personal a beginning for this article, if it were not that such a beginning lends weight to the following affirmation: that Tragedy, in the West, is becoming more and more a luxury, and a badly tended luxury at that. The flirtations of our contemporaries with Dostoievski and other catastrophes would make an authentic semi-Barbarian smile; the waste of time would annoy him somewhat. Proud of his differences? It may be, but in any event, a valuable experience which may be of service in an age of transition. Assuredly, there must be unknowns in an equation, but there must likewise be the means of ascertaining their value. Too many Frenchmen today are familiar only with the unknown term in their equation. Between a fecund limitation and a vague universalism, it is important to choose. I give Jean Prévost credit for having simplified our annoyances in the extreme, for I see in such a simplification a priming for the only heroism with which it behooves us to be concerned today, a truly fertile heroism, for the reason that it is

useful to all, a truly difficult one, for the reason that it represents a backward climb up the slope of our instincts: the heroism of modesty. France must be persuaded that the greatness of the West lies not so much in Christianity's mingled bloodstream as it does in Humanism, whose imperiled wisdom and austere epicureanism have been responsible for lasting victories on the part of our civilization. No doubt, the Christian names are as good as the "humanistic" ones; but the untutored strength of a Cervantes, of a Fielding, of a Meredith asserts itself without ever making use of the easy paths of fame and passion. Greatness of that sort is not to be replaced.

There are too many signs to make it possible for us to doubt that we are witnessing a renaissance of the struggle between humanism and mysticism. Over against the Catholic *Roseau d'Or* editions, we have the anti-Christian *Editions du Siècle;* for a novel like the *Fleuve de Feu,* we have one like *La Bonifas;* while Jean Prévost is engaged in bringing the *mal du siècle* rudely back to earth, Marcel Arland is exalting its potentialities to the infinite degree. Politics might provide us with similar contrasts: socialism-communism (the evolution of the Surréalistes is significant), to say nothing of that Party of Order, purged of nationalistic mysticism, of which Drieu has spoken and of which others are thinking.—An avowed Humanist, I would play the modest part of liaison-agent between my comrades, and would remind them, by virtue of that complex heredity to which I have alluded, that wisdom and moderation, equilibrium and bridled strength, the free play of all our faculties, *a scorn for all religion,* the courage of intelligence does not constitute a refusal of the tragic, but, quite the contrary, *represents a utilization of the tragic;* that it is the others who are the wastrels, the hedonists of anguish, the deserters of the infinite.

Dramatic is something that Humanism must be, since in an age that goes in for extremes, patience, little human respect and much passion are called for, if one is to hold to the path of moderation; and also for the reason that Humanism represents a constantly disputed conquest. But it ought to be, for that matter, in the strictly technical sense of the word. What distinguished, it would appear, the young literary team, the young writers of 1919, was their concern with obtaining a complete view of man, or, if you prefer, a view of the complete man. Our immediate elders were occupied with sections of human reality, one reserving the department of sensations, another that of pure thought, a third that of the metaphoric dream-state; they cut up the individual and were not con-

cerned with putting him together again. Today, quite other predilections are apparent: one is Thomistic, that is to say, one goes back to a systematization of the world; one is anti-Christian (and no longer anti-clerical), which is to say that one would replace Christianity with something else; Maurice and Lacretelle—I am not speaking of values—would not be satisfied with the exclusive sensualism of Marcel Proust, for the reason that they are engaged in writing novels, bringing the dramatic antagonist back into play, and there is no drama without conflict and no conflict without individuals who are complete and distinct one from another. And so, the world and man are being rebuilt, by reason of the double necessity of life and of art. Accordingly, one is beginning to take account of the fact—at least, those among us who have not wandered off into the theological or the messianic swirl are beginning to do so—that the point of view of action is the only one from which it is possible to look at individual man, in his entirety and in his original reality.

I have just made a long detour by way of getting around to the exposition of a summary program; may one who hates speaking of himself be pardoned for so doing in the present instance. This program, for which I have just suggested an historic justification, is wholly bound up with the idea of liaison, action being considered as the unifying principle of man, the point at which all his potentialities are truly realized. In other words, the sentiments which I have indicated having brought me to Humanism, I would apply to Humanism a psychologic method, the direct opposite of the one employed by our elders. The latter knew man through introspection or through documents; that is, they analyzed *facts*. The fact is a thing *done*, a thing past. Retrospective analysis excises facts from the memory, abstracting them from the living individual of which they are a part; then, it sews these facts up together again the best way it can. *And so it comes that thought never touches the living individual, but only the decomposed or recomposed memories of that individual.*

If, on the other hand, we succeed in setting up a synchronism between thought and the active life of man,—and in so doing, one would merely be taking cognizance of the processes of all sovereign art,—this one and indivisable conception becomes possible; for a single act contains the man entire, whereas a simple feeling or sensation contains only itself. And now, what are the genres which are the best adapted to the setting up of this synchronism? Dramatic art, first of all, in which we see the author, dramatist or novelist,

through a real *imaginative conversion,* postulating the unity of his characters in the action that is represented. Then, History, Confessions, Newspapers, Memoirs, where we may analyze and re-erect our consciousness. Criticism, too, which would apply dramatic analysis to great cultural works, thus renovating a somewhat fatigued genre. Experimental science, finally, where behavioristic psychology finds a legitimate place, and one which, I trust, is to be an increasingly important one. If the intelligence would save itself, let it take refuge in action; and the individual and society will be equally well off.

For the present, I would not limit my task. I should like to try my hand first at all the genres, and then specialize in the one that seems to suit me best.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *Les Cahiers du Mois.*)

THE LITERATURE OF THE BODY

(SPORT AND ATHLETICS IN LITERATURE)

1922–1926

As stated in the General Introduction to this work, the human body has been "discovered" by the after-the-War young as one escape from that distressing breakup of the psychic personality which is so prominent a feature of much contemporary writing. This has conferred a new dignity upon sport and athletics as literary themes, and a whole new literature on the subject is the result. The thing may be said to have begun along about 1922, with writers such as Morand, Montherlant, Bloch and others. It achieves something like a philosophic, almost a religious, formulation in Prévost's *Plaisirs des Sports,* 1924; while René Crevel's *Mon Corps et moi,* 1926, may be taken as, in a manner, marking the climax and incipient diminution of the impulse, by giving to that impulse another, more subjective and even morbid turn. One should not forget, in this connection, Robet Honnert's *Corps et âme*—or Dominique Braga's *5,000.* All in all, however, it has seemed that the theme

might be amply represented by Prévost and Bloch, particularly since Morand and Montherlant have been represented in other sections.

Jean Prévost

Jean Prévost is a young Frenchman who is at present an instructor in Cambridge University, England. Plaisirs des Sports, *his first book,* was published in *1924. He is also the author of a novel,* Les Frères Bouquinquant. *He has displayed social-revolutionary leanings, but at the present moment his thought appears to be in a transitional state.*

FROM "PLAISIRS DES SPORTS"

CONCERNING THE PLAN OF THE BOOK

For three years past, I have thought that I could make out certain bodily sensations, especially sensations of movement, which no one had yet noticed. And certain feelings arose out of these which likewise impressed me as being novel. A few ideas as well; I could find nothing to show me the way, later than Leonardo da Vinci's *Treatise on Painting*. Sporting literature, which had begun in a manner sometimes startling, frequently commendable, was on a different path. The breadth and novelty of my subject dismayed me, and frightened me still more.

My ideas ripen slowly; I do not naturally possess a quick mind, and my university training has not succeeded in curing my doltishness. Before writing a line of *Plaisirs des Sports,* these subjects had occupied my attention almost exclusively for a year and a half. I was distrustful of myself, but grew reassured when I was led to believe that I had discovered a method.

A number of friends and a few books had informed me that Hindu asceticism, *Yoga,* teaches the directing of the attention upon the body. I proceeded to adapt this method to my own disposition and to my own special aims. I directed my attention, in turn, upon breathing, upon circulation, upon the digestive functions, upon the data or the recollections of the muscles, the nerves, the joints. By way of refining these sensations, I had recourse to coffee, to fasting, to fatigue. I multiplied my experiences in order to create a special sort of memory; I practically forced myself to remember my-

self; for inasmuch as our body retains a trace of everything, self-recollection is, more than one thinks, a matter of will. I did not carry my experiments too far; for all thought that is turned inward upon itself tends imperceptibly to evade the customary rules of experience, and what I wished above all to avoid was a state of dream or fantasy. I stopped each time that my too impoverished sensations would have reduced the attentive mind to a slow-camera sort of life, dull, vegetable, what another, it may be, would have described as ecstasy. When these sensations were sufficiently opulent, they erected in me something like an inner world, which I evoked, not by words, but by an incipient gesture such as would cause those sensations to spring up again. A too rigid control exerted over my breathing and the beating of my heart sometimes made me painfully aware of the risks involved in the method. The majority of sports were in a position to serve me as a field for experimentation; I trust I shall be excused for the fact that, in the course of my long apprenticeship, my poverty has stood in the way of making these studies as complete as I should like them to have been.

This portion of my task being happily accomplished, there remained: self-expression. I wanted a description that should be accurate and full, a form of analysis for which Proust, who was my enthusiasm at the time, afforded me a model; but I felt that precision of movement was more important than analysis, being essential to analysis itself, which without it is no more than a pasting-on of labels, an epitaphing of things.

But words were lacking for the new sensations. A substitute word, a made-up expression, occasionally sufficed. I have sought, above all, the precise rather than the new or startling image. I have awaited, and waited upon, my vocabulary for a long time; certain fragments of this sorry book have been rewritten sixteen times, certain lines have been more than a month in coming. I am obliged to recognize the fact that I have, more often than not, failed; many sensations which I thought new no longer find any correspondence within me other than the evocative gesture, which is incommunicable. I have also failed frequently in the matter of movement, and there I must blame myself rather than any objective difficulty. And since, in order to convey the sense of movement, one must choose from among details, I have undoubtedly sometimes spoiled the analysis itself.

Only the conclusions remain, for the reason that they are adaptable to a commoner and curter mode of speech. They will be found lacking, however, in what has gone before,—in that which is their

background and support. I nonetheless believe that all the ideas which I set forth here are true; and it is my deepest wish that they may be understood and accepted. Looking upon them with the least possible vanity, I believe that they are often just and sometimes useful. In the beginning, I labored over them for myself; later, I found more satisfaction in working for others. If a writer with a livelier and cleaner-cut imagination is able to take them and handle them successfully, I make him a present of them with all my heart. I am happy that Montherlant, in his *Paradis,* has dealt better than I ever could have done with that sharpened sensation which comes from fleeing physical strength, and that Braga, in *5,000,* has been better able than I to describe an endurance-race. These ideas were carried to a successful conclusion before me: all the better. But the task which no other has undertaken is vast and burdensome.

What *Plaisirs des Sports* has to give, therefore, is nothing else than the ashes of a forest of plans and dreams. But it is by the work and not by the intention that I shall have to be judged. This book, such as it is, so long labored over, so often done over, may yet fill its purpose, prove suggestive. But it is time for me to stop. I have done what I could.

EDUCATION

What turned me first of all to the bare-handed exercises of Swedish gymnastics was the simplicity of the apparatus required and, especially, the solitude that these exercises permitted. I was so ignorant, in the beginning, of the true conditions of strength and beauty that I only applied myself to the arm and leg movements. But soon, as if these gymnastics conferred upon my whole body a true intelligence of self, I came to devote my chief attention to the movements of the torso. It was a species of happiness for me to come to these exercises, very awkward and almost tied in a knot; incapable of going through with the movements in their full sweep, I every day sought to enlarge that portion of a circle which I was able to describe. (For all the movements appear to be worshipfully imitating the most perfect of forms, the circumference and the sphere.) The pleasure of the performance was, thus, a compensation from the very start. And then, as soon as the first results had been obtained, I redoubled my painstaking zeal, my careful attempts to correct my movements. I had acquired that Puritan spirit, that sense of scruple, that craving for duty which are the inspiration of those movements, as regulated and as sacred as a prayer, and which are no longer

effective when the worshiper grows lukewarm in his devotions. I was astonished at this strange exigency, which would not for a moment permit the attention to relax; and if the attention did relax, the task became long and arduous, almost impossible to go on with. For ardor must be kindled from the beginning and must grow until the end, or the thing is nothing but profitless boredom. . . . That, moreover, is why it is practically impossible to make a collective exercise of the thing, to direct the movements of a single pupil, or to cause to be repeated those which one accomplishes one's self; for ardor cannot be commanded, and ardor is the only profit to be gained from these exercises. I ended by finding the actual execution of the exercises the most profitable phase; after having taken in the description or the image of a movement, I would picture it in my mind; I then would go ahead and accomplish it, still meditating upon it, with a hard, geometrical precision and in a sort of violent ecstasy. These gymnastics put muscle on me; that means little; dumb-bells or elastics will put on an abundance of useless muscle in a very short while. But it made me conscious, all over, of my will, which came to learn what was meant by the slow and aggressive pressure of constant effort, and by those abrupt explosions which, coming from the center of the body, extend the extremities in sudden movements. The lack of objective, which renders this form of gymnastics disagreeable to many, is made up for by an internal struggle between the active and the passive parts of the body; all those muscles which are not immediately in use, piled up like a mass of soft flesh, grow warm and flabby for a moment and appear to have been forgotten by the nerves; after a silently attentive session of this sort, the muscles which control the voice become so weakened that the gymnast, as a result, sounds hoarse for a few minutes; and I often found difficulty in moving my lips.

This method pleased me, too, on account of all the experiences which it suggested to me. My body up to that time had instructed me only concerning external things, such as hunger, the lower needs, or the desire for sleep. But I found that, by storing up in those muscles which I picked in turn the fatigue which comes from a prolonged and repeated movement, a new sensation was born along with the unpleasant one; it was a sensation that filled the whole muscle, stretching out its contours, and causing it to vibrate intensely. When this extreme point was reached, it seemed to leap from the body and to be pressing its weight against the latter in the manner of a foreign object, pulling down over the shoulders

like a stretched thong, oppressing and pricking with sharp-shooting pains the curvature of the loins. At the top of the arms, it shook the shoulders as if to dislocate them; in the pectoral region, it separated one half of the body from the other. But in the upper abdominal region, it radiated and burned, covering up the insinuations of hunger. In the muscles more rarely brought into play, it aroused rebellious cramps.

Following the exercises, as I lay stretched out, I would repeat them in imagination, one after the other, and the ghost of a command would send quivers down into the calves of my legs, so sensitive, so heavy, or else would so excite my wearied torso muscles that it would seem as if the seat of my cogitations had been transferred there. In touching with a finger the skin of arm or leg, I felt the contact localized with a preciseness that was quite unfamiliar to me; in working in a slow and easy manner my fulcrum bones, I would perceive, in the flexing or unflexing of an elbow, infinitesimal differences of angular degree. The most astonishing thing was that a very simple, unexpressed command could engender complicated gestures which my memory alone was able to describe to my mind, with an apparent objectivity. At moments when the motionless body called for more exercise, it seemed to contain a herd of sensitive and all too lively animals.

These communications and these sluggish spells on the part of my muscles remained a language, although a subtle, foreign one—like news telephoned from the provinces. A new organic life, a more curious sort of life, a life that was more myself, stimulated by the strenuousness of my exercises, mounted to the level of my thoughts.

When I came to rest, the massaging of my veins and the conscientious pounding of my heart made me aware of my blood-stream, which circulated as in the troughs of a well-regulated factory. Pulses everywhere responded to the central pulse; light, sharp beats in the wrist, prolonged in a faint trembling of the thumb and index-finger, and in my throat a muffled gurgle like the purring of a cat; above my thighs, the arterial jerks spread out in wary quiverings. When all these movements had subsided, and most often after a bath or shower, I would experience an intense feeling of the fluidity of my flesh.

Lung-play would begin during the exercises themselves, and would render me from the start more sensitive to odors, temperatures and the slightest differences in atmosphere. The few movements which, from time to time, I devoted to respiration alone would diminish

my body's mass by a great, cold, interiorly relaxing void; then a tingling which gradually grew more pronounced would give me to understand that the fire within was burning more actively than ever. In the rest-period which followed, I would throw my shoulders back to expand my lungs and enjoy for a time the activity of that internal combustion, which, mingled with the fluidity of my flesh, heightened by the bath, would fill me with pride and calm and a sense of health.

The stomach, which at first had been constricted and annoyed by the exercises, and to which the writhings and twistings of my torso had given the illusion of swallowing and of being glutted, with nothing to show for it all, was to share later in the general joy, by blazing with hunger.

From the time that the organic sensations became conscious, thanks to these violent states, I retained the power to evoke them anew, even at the calmest moments, and I thus learned the manner in which their rhythm governed my actions.

The slow calm heart-beat governs those moments which are lost in reflection or emotion, all the inner moments; the more ample and slower beat, on the other hand, cuts up into longer and more uniform slices those external moments which are given to attention and to actions. But this was merely the clock-face; the stomach, whether hungry or engaged in digestion, knew the time of day, and when given the benefit of a steady régime, it was as regular as clock-work.

. . . . .

This attention to the things of the body, these new gifts which I had not sought, but which had come of their own accord, provided me with occupation when not engaged in the exercises, and conferred the appearance of revery upon a train of thought which was, for all of that, sustained and compact. I was thus taught to know my body, not only through that which sport had to give me, but through all the variations that it underwent at all the moments of its life. This variety of impressions, this full and ample presence, had long since cured me of the illusion which leads some to believe that the thinker in them lies concealed behind their shut eyes. This knowledge of the little inner world might have been of profit to me in attaining to a knowledge of the larger world outside, and might have endowed me with a balanced wisdom, had I been worthy of it.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Jean-Richard Bloch

Jean-Richard Bloch's literary career began before the War, with his collection of tales, Lévy *(1912). He is sometimes regarded as a radical or "left-wing" writer, but his interests are at once broader and deeper—more deeply spiritual—than that. His analysis and indictment of his age is to be found in his* Carnaval est mort *(1920). Analysis is, indeed, his gift, a gift which he has applied to a comprehension of the machine age in which he finds himself living; he is both entranced and dismayed by the spectacle of our mechanistic civilization. In* Et Cie (" & Co.") *(1918), he gives us a picture of an Alsatian family becoming industrial overlords. In* La Nuit Kurd ("A Night in Kurdistan"), *he turns to ancestral legend and a dream-like atmosphere; this work was recently brought out in English (originally published in 1925). Other works are* Sur un Cargo *(1924);* Première journée à Rufisque *(1926). M. Bloch is not so well known as a poet; and the following selection, in addition to being a contribution to the "literature of the body," should be of interest for this reason.*

IDEA OF A SWIMMER

I found you in a newspaper,
I surreptitiously cut you out,
I took you, I carried you away,
Clasping your image to my bosom,
And back in my room I smoothed out under my thumb
The shiny creases in the cheap-grade paper.

I found you in a sporting paper,
An ordinary paper in a dentist's waiting-room,
Amid a hundred stupid photos
Of cyclists with concave chests,
Of naïvely winded boxers,
Of managers with frog-like jaws,
Of ceremonious gloved fencers.

Turning the page, I found your laughing image,
In the eternal pose that you had learned,
Permitting you to wait

For all eternity, if need had been,
Till I had turned that page and met you,
Young American swimmer in this French magazine.

You were so sure of yourself that you laughed in advance
At yourself, at me, at my foreseen astonishment
And at your nudity
As at a joke.
I pasted you to a piece of cardboard
And put you on the wall with four thumb-tacks.
Whether I come or go, I see you as I pass.
At the slightest movement that I make in my cell,
You greet me with your body and your laugh.

Your laugh is neither vain nor stupid, arrogant nor timid,
It is not that of little occasional heroes
Stunned by their fame and flowers, the champagne and the calcium.
It is that of the great sires that you, I presume, have had,
And of whom I discover in you the build,—the Mohican and the Norwegian,—
Two proud races, my friend, on a level with life.

Your body has not that shameful air
Of not knowing what's to be done when taken from its sheath.
Nor is it a dull and heavy exhibition
Of muscles and of fat,
Poster for an event or a trainer's ad.

I recall having seen at my own house one day
A man who must have been like you.
He came from your country and he trod the air
Not like a stranger in an unfamiliar fluid,
Not, like them all, breathless and badgered,
Always ready with excuses, smiles and modesty.

But like a legitimate occupant of space and its dimensions,
A peaceful conqueror of our hearts and of the world,
And when he had entered that vast room,
It of a sudden seemed to have found
The guest it had been wanting for a hundred-fifty years.

I thought: here is one who comes to give a meaning
To shabby folds, arid cloth and narrow vestments,
One whose place we merely held,
One for whom were made the women that we use,
For whom the streets were hollowed out, the houses built,
One of whom other men have the usufruct.
Who comes as master where he comes,
And at once strikes up circumferential contact,
Whose gray hair tosses to the wind of the antipodes.

Like him in his flowing tawny garb,
You too can be nude, in your double harmony
Of man and ship,
Relying, you too, on volumes and equilibrium,
Stem at your throat, ship's timbers in your hips,
Loins hollowed out like a deck, wide floating belly,
Round shoulders, where meet,
In an exact span of swelling masses,
Your arms, those two great circular flails,
Equipped with thick hands
For breasting and for striking out.

Your thighs alone suffice you, having in themselves
Both plenitude and length, the shadowless tapering surfaces
Of a pair of powerful sea-animals,
And I call up the unctuous curves,
The muscular furrows, the streaming emerald
To be seen on pearly dolphins
As they leap up in the wave at the prow,
Trigger-carved and for propulsion,

Or else, the god Ares, as the Greeks depicted him,
Seated, pensive, and holding between his legs
The infant Cupid.
What does it matter that at this moment you are somewhere,
That you have friends, days, pleasures,
Gnawed in your form and your integrity.
I've taken you from life, from yourself,
I retain you in your immortality
Of a young and ancient marble god,

That I in turn may freely, as an equal,
Without equivocation or timidity,
When I am seized by a nostalgia
For that superhuman world from which I'm exiled,—
That I may lean my elbow on your knee.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE CATHOLIC (NEO-THOMIST) REACTION

(1925–1926)

It was in October, 1925, that Jean Cocteau wrote his "Letter to Jacques Maritain," and it was the following January that the leader of Neo-Thomism gave his "Response to Jean Cocteau." These events may be taken as serving to date and crystallize the after-War reaction in the general direction of the Catholic Church, as a "Return to Order," and toward the rigid philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, as opposed to the "Bergsonian stream."

FROM THE "LETTER TO JACQUES MARITAIN"

By Jean Cocteau

These attempted evasions left their mark on my soul. Weariness saved me; I wept, I hid away at the seaside, I drew and quartered myself in the sun, I dreamed of calm and of living happily. I shaped for myself an ideal of joy.

. . . . .

My indolence likes to take orders. From whom shall I consent to take them, except God? It is not mysticism which has convinced me. I adore miracles, but they give me a feeling of constraint, like all tests. What goes to convince an undecided intelligence is the carcass of our religion, its ciphers, its algebra of love.

What is more gullible, what more wishy-washy than eighteenth-century scepticism? One does not hate it; one savors it, as an attitude of mind, an attitude which with science quickly reaches the

height of vulgarity.[1] Man's great discoveries are castaways brought up by the tide. Never yet has he discovered an America in the supernatural. And look at the pitiful sea-shells, where he listens to God without hearing Him, where he thinks he is hearing himself. And there you have the literature of the nineteenth century hard-heads. And therein lies all of literature? What then?

Literature is impossible. One must get out of it. It is useless to try to get out through literature; love and faith alone enable us to get out of ourselves. To have recourse to the dream is not to leave the house; it is to rummage in the attic, where our childhood finds a contact with poetry.

Art for art's sake and art for the crowd's sake are equally absurd. I suggest an art for God.

Imagine, my dear Jacques, the pleasure of having a language freed from Rimbaud (who at the present moment clutters it up worse than Hugo) and from the Maldoror superstition. Youth would be able to breathe free once more.

What am I saying? I am very timid. . . . Here I am, denouncing art for art, and forgetting the chief thing: Man is a work of God. A work that works, that is the climax! The sacred fluid dispensed into a third hand.

Why make a cushion-shot of that persuasive force with which God has endowed us, and which is none other than Himself? I am beginning to tire of the beautiful, incapable of facing out any hazard whatsoever. I conceive an age in which the mind, abandoning its awkward vehicles, would give up trying to convince through the interpolation of the masterpiece. Beauty would gradually become goodness, masterpieces acts of the heart, and holiness would be genius. One vast series of big and little hypnoses would banish the traffic. The book, the canvas, the oils and the ink would disappear like horse-cabs. The strong man would bring forth the volumes of his mind as unfailingly and as instantaneously as the fakir does his rose-bush; the old apparatus would no longer be able to photograph our divine turns. I touch the future with celestial fingers. One day, it will no longer be a matter of deceiving the birds, not even the Cubistic birds, but of training the birds to feed on an unreal grape.

Up to this year, incapable of hatred or of rancor, I sought to

[1] Heaven once in a while constructs an arch over these deluges of aridity and sets afloat upon it, with their animal following, a big-hearted family such as the Berthelots. An unbelieving family, but one possessing—am I not right, Claudel?—the virtues that faith gives.

determine my position with reference to my adversaries (you know of whom it is I speak); for it is very lonesome having to defend one's adversaries in the presence of those persons with whom one declines to have anything to do, and who do not possess any of those high qualities which are required for the attack they propose to make.

Avoid them? How would you have me avoid them? Such and such a painter, such and such a poet, such and such a revolt constitute our fatal meeting-place. Then, there is a negative resemblance between them, these individuals who, all too wide awake, endeavor by burglary to make their way into the dream, and into me,—into me who sleep standing up, and who am endeavoring by burglary to make my way into reality.

A poet walks with his feet in the clouds; they, by an arrangement of mirrors, pretend to possess that power. But this does not prevent my esteeming their tricks of magic away and above the contemporary poetic production.[2]

I shall be reminded that I am crying up a species of injustice; I shall be reproached with an excess of scruples and a foolish elegance, adapted to muddle the world, which stuffs us all down the same bag. If the true pleads for the false, how find one's way about? It is simple: Let loose your bees; you will see on whom they alight.

Today, my attitude is changing. I do not seek it any more. We love our enemies. How should I despise those spiteful friends who bruise themselves on death?

. . . . .

The Leopold-Loeb case is to be recalled.[3] Richard Loeb (19 years), nicknamed by his comrades "Angel Face," and Nathan Leopold (18 years), members of a rich Jewish family of Chicago and the pride of the local University, assassinated gratuitously, as Gide would say, a young boy, Bobby Franks, son of Jacob Franks, a friend of their families, after minute preparations to avoid detection. Leopold's horn-rimmed glasses, dropped near the body, constituted the fatal flaw in the construction of this masterpiece. Their attitude during the trial was impeccable. They laughed and contradicted themselves, expressly for the purpose of demoralizing their judges. "Angel Face"

[2] I except a poet, a painter who know how to walk inside-out.

[3] Editor's Note.—With M. Cocteau's permission, one of the postscripts to his Letter is here inserted in the text, which is picked up again immediately following.

and his weak and admiring accomplice, accustomed to luxury, saw prison confronting them without a shudder.

The truth, the real truth, truer than the hidden truth of the case, is that Clarence Darrow should have set aside his plea, in favor of a course in literature, while the weapon which Loeb placed in Leopold's hand should have been a paper-knife.

One indispensable detail: Leopold was a bird-charmer. He made contributions to science. Wild birds would come and alight on him and let them take films of the scene.

. . . . .

Ah, my dear Maritain, it is hard for me to make you understand. I am the victim of an overwhelming transition. An air of incoherence becomes me better than that of a wretch who is always changing livery. Books like *Le Coq et L'Arlequin, Visites à Barrès, Le Secret Professionnel* or this letter are but a pyrotechnician's fuse. I am walking at the bottom of a nocturnal scaffolding. Unknown young friends mournfully ram home charges which they do not know how to touch off; and now, with what joy I touch them off, for you as well as I know the name that will be inscribed there.

This is my part. I must stick to it. It is I who should assume your device: "I am an ass, and I bear the Lord." For God will have no dexterity. May I keep, in praising Him, my accustomed gait, remain free as Charles advises, and not have to fear the bull in the shop!

Motion sleeps at the center of a turning wheel. The farther one recedes from the center, the more one finds one's self drawn in toward it.

. . . . .

Alas, I had to act quickly, cry loudly. That is the excuse for this childish letter.

I shall bear unblushingly the smile of theologians, if only it may serve to stimulate a few young Catholics.

The place where the extreme right and the extreme left meet remains to be found. Does there exist a program more rugged or more exciting than that of following Christianity out to the letter?

. . . . .

I must find my path in the air. This tight-rope leads me to Catholicism, that is, home. It is, then, false to speak of conversion. Only, how am I to keep from shocking some one? The acrobat's manner is not to be abandoned in a day.

. . . . .

You will understand that I have expressly avoided philosophic language, that I have endeavored simply to be clear in a region in which there is no clarity. I would render my ideas tangible, be able to lay them upon the table. This is the opposite of the *style de luxe.*

It would be easy for me to expand upon my text, to put it on a pedestal at need. But then, what plumbing would be required! and how feebly my pollens would flutter!

Our age is infested with horn-rimmed boobies, who hang out in the wings of audaciousness, do much loud talking, and judge everything. I can hear them saying: "Where is this letter getting to?"

Make room for the marvelous, young clowns! It is a love-letter. The *Coq et L'Arlequin* was a love-book. It was born from the weariness of my ears as this letter is born from the weariness of my soul. It might or might not have succeeded; that depended upon the musicians; they have done it. To sharpen the wits of the heart is a task for poets. To sustain hearts is your rôle, my dear Jacques. As for me, I have only the strength left to cry: "I can do no more."

Villefranche, October, 1925.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Jacques Maritain

Jacques Maritain is the founder and leader of the Neo-Thomist movement in France, which has had a considerable influence outside of France,—as, for example, in England, Mr. T. S. Eliot, etc. Maritain began in 1911, as a rebel against Bergson and the philosophy of flux. See his Evolutionisme de M. Bergson, *1911, and his* Philosophie de M. Bergson, *1913. His attitude also represents a phase of the modern French revolt against Renan, and, following Charles Maurras and the* École Romane, *against Romanticism. He is aligned, in general, with the group of writers which includes Maurras, Henri Massis, and Léon Daudet and the Action Française contingent, though there may be political and theological differences between these men. In 1920, seven years after his first attack on Bergson, Maritain began outlining a more positive attitude, with his* Art et Scholastique, *followed by his* S. Thomas d'Aquin, apôtre des temps modernes, *1923. "Neo-Thomism" is, therefore, essentially an after-War phenomenon. This position has been attacked by Pierre Las-*

serre and others (see M. Lucien Dubech's Les chefs de file de la jeune génération, *1925); its Neo-Thomism nevertheless remains one of the most formidable intellectual weapons ever forged, and is one of the crucial outposts, at the present time, of the anti-Romanticists and the anti-Bergsonians. Maritain's other works include:* Antimoderne; Eléments de Philosophie; Théonas; Réflexions sur l'intelligence et sur sa vie propre; *and* Trois Réformateurs.

FROM THE "RESPONSE TO JEAN COCTEAU"

In your letter, my dear Jean, you have had much to say of me, and you have forced me to say "I" very often in this response. It is a thing I do not like, and one which is less becoming in a philosopher than in a poet. However, I must continue in this strain for a few seconds more.

I am, as you know, a disciple, the most unworthy and the latest comer of them all, of St. Thomas Aquinas; rather, a disciple of his disciples,—a Jacques out of Jean out of Gaetan out of Dominique out of Reginald out of St. Thomas, all of which is as Byzantine, as scholastic, as contemptible as can be in the eyes of the princes of the Sorbonne. As the hairs of each of our heads are numbered, so does each of us have his humble task of profitless husbandman well mapped out for him in heaven. I think I have some idea of my own task. I am riveted to the most dogmatic and sharply outlined body of thought that there is, the least capable of compromise or attenuation, and to a doctrine that is absolutely unrelenting, in order that, as I cursorily contemplate this age of ours, I may undertake a labor not of dispersion but of reconciliation and assumption. That is because I have confidence in the truth. Universal as she is, she still must gather up the fragments which have been filched from her unity, and she alone is able to do so. Minds only recognize one another in the light; the purer it is, the freer from shadows, the more it draws them together.

It has been necessary for me to begin with controversy; but that wearies me more and more. I am aware of the errors that devastate the modern world, and of the fact that the world's only greatness is its sorrow, but I respect that sorrow. I behold everywhere captive truths; what Order of Mercy will spring up to ransom them? Our

business is to seek the positive in all things, to make use of the truth less for striking than for healing. There is so little love in the world, hearts are so cold, so frozen, even with those who are in the right, the only ones who are in a position to succor the others. One must have a hard mind and a soft heart. Not counting the soft minds with withered hearts, the world is almost entirely made up of hard minds with withered hearts and of soft hearts with soft minds.

The principal function of Thomism has been, and will be always, a sacred one: towering above the battlements of the Church, it theologically defends divine truth against the aggressions of error. And now, the Pope has ordered it to go out into the highways, to the scandal of reasonable individuals, who thought they had it all nicely classified in their files, on the proper chronological card, being quite sure that Christian-Scholastic philosophy had nothing more to offer than Mussulman scholasticism or Buddhistic scholasticism; but the time has come for it to labor philosophically in a profane field, by way of showing to the world its renewed youth, its curiosity, its boldness, and its freedom, thus to gather up the dispersed heritage of wisdom. For an extremely ambitious undertaking, one fits himself out carefully; one's doctrine is stricter and cleaner-cut, one's discipline more severe, one's faithfulness more unflagging, and one's actions freer. Nothing was easier to understand. But what a program! From having had an inkling of it, I am no longer content with what I do, I think worse of myself than do all my critics put together, and if it were not for Christian charity, some little spark of which I trust that God will grant me, I should see in all my efforts only deception and a labor that is vain. But it is not for me to be telling you that difficult positions are the only ones worth holding.

. . . . .

Art, from a certain point of view and in its own interests, may make free use of all things. The *imperium artis* extends wherever forms and beauty are to be found. Wisdom likewise has its empire, universal and absolute. It is endowed with a sacred immobility. The life of art lies in motion, molting is its law, it inhabits a land given over to the fluctuations of the senses; the place where its hand rests, as you perfectly put it, speedily loses its refreshing coolness. Wisdom shares that motionless activity which constitutes the life of its objects; "God is the only coolness that does not need to be

warmed over." That philosopher would be a coward who would forsake the eternal for the changeable. Art or literature, social or political life, he is lost if he allies himself with what is not above time. I would not be a Thomist, if I did not know these things. With no calling here below save to bear witness as best I can in behalf of wisdom, I owe myself to all, whoever they may be, who seek her. I know what my object is; a greater than I has attached me to it. *Tenui, nec dimittam.*

Under such circumstances, I have a heart that is free to suffer as it must. A fearful compassion lays hold of me at thought of the generation that is twenty years old today. The best of them are going to the dogs. Whose fault is it? It is the fault of that abominable world whose victims they are. And especially, the fault of us Catholics. For we are responsible for everything, possessing as we do the light of redemption in our evil human hearts.

. . . . .

"When you think you hate your enemy," says St. Augustine, "as often as not, it is your own brother that you hate, and you do not know it." Many of those who believe themselves our enemies are nearer to us than they think, or than we think. They are wishing with an admirable strength for that same God whom we love, whom we do not love enough. If we had loved Him more, would not they know Him? The only conception they have of religion is a vague Cartesian caricature, and they see in it only meaningless practices and a comfortable morality. The modern world has taught that God is elaborated in man; it has reversed the order of things, made the pure Act dependent upon ourselves. From the premises which have been given them, they at least deserve credit for having drawn the conclusion: Despair. Alas, they are looking for God through self-destruction. The instinct of their immortal souls, the very instinct coming from that baptism which the majority of them once received, impels them toward an absolute which they think they have to invent, not knowing that it is there, more a part of themselves than they themselves are, for it is the thing which has made them. A saint is extending to them his arms, a saint who has found what they are looking for; the sleep-walker's false night can only be cured by the night of St. John of the Cross.

. . . . .

Your letter, my dear Jean, closes a chain which began with LE COQ ET L'ARLEQUIN. As for my part, I am going back to the

Logica Major and to the *Prima Philosophia,* to the four modes of per-se-ity, and to the great question of QUO and QUOD.

Meudon, January, 1926.
(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE TIRED TRAVELER

1927

Henry de Montherlant may be looked upon as typifying the exhaustion of that impulse to travel, and to explore a new-found and shimmering after-War world that marked the early years of the decade. The original of the following essay was published in *La Nouvelle Revue Française* for June 1, 1927.

Henry de Montherlant

Henry de Montherlant once received a letter from Romain Rolland, which read: "You are the greatest force that exists in French letters. The world is richer for me now that I have come to know you." Montherlant was born in 1896, of a family of Picardy which later came to settle at Neuilly-sur-Seine, near Paris. He was educated by priests, and was a schoolmate of Louis Aragon. He was seriously wounded in the War. He was a neighbor of Maurice Barrès at Neuilly, and of François Mauriac. From youth, he has had two interests, athletics and literature. His first book, Relève de matin, *1920, is in the nature of a hymn to his school; his* Le Songe, *1922, one of France's outstanding War books, is a moving description of his classmates' departure for the front. His poetic bibliography consists of:* Les Onze devant la porte dorée, *and* Deuxième Olympique, *1924. His other prose works are:* Le Paradis à l'ombre des Epées, *1924;* Chant funèbre pour les morts de Verdun, *1924; and* Les Bestiaires *(available in English translation), 1924. Montherlant is another representative of the "literature of the body." Of a Catholic family, his orthodoxy is somewhat doubtful. A three-fold influence has been seen in his work: that of D'Annunzio, Claudel and Barrès. His ambition is to follow in the footsteps of the celebrated bull-fighters. A friend of Morand's, he has traveled and known the disillusionment of travel, of running away from one's self. At bottom, he is a Romantic, as the following selection shows.*

MARGINAL NOTES TO THE "VOYAGEURS TRAQUES"

I have attained the flaming ramparts of the world. The song of a nightingale keeps me awake. Nature has said to me as in *Lucrèce:* "Imagine some new and pleasing invention, for I can do no more. Things are always the same." Is this, then, all?

In vain, in vain, from my window, the sun on the hillside above the sea. I have suffered enough, yes, there, in that same sun. There is no longer any promise in the sun. No longer any appeal in things. No longer any appeal in beings. I have had much too much, and much more than enough.

(These beings, these bodies, all this youth with which I am glutted. . . . These desires which I have flung in all directions. . . . Poor bodies! They have given me what they could.)

One by one, I have beheld dropping away my reasons for bestirring myself, submerged, each in its turn, by indifference, that rising tide. Religion,—and then, the attraction of souls,—and then, fraternity (which I have only been able to experience in the War), —and then, the longing for fame,—and then, curiosity and the self-fondness that was mine. The only thing that remained, along with an inexhaustible love of pleasure, which it rarely was able to afford me, was the will to create a work of literature. I thought that, whatever happened, this volition would remain intact.

But with the occasional approach of death,—for sometimes I have thought that I was drawing near the end,—I have been led to measure, not the importance of those monuments that perpetuate us, but their vanity. Ah, if some one were to say to me: "You have only a year more to live," I can be sure that I would not, in such a case, rush to my pen! Today, the creation of a work of art impresses me as being a loss of time, a mistake. To stay bent over and engaged in erasing words while throughout the wide world beings are waiting to be pursued and captured, is nothing less than death, and the finest page, for the one who has written it, is none-the-less death, worse than a death-bed despair. Balzac, Flaubert, noble *poussahs* bored into your writing-tables, you have missed out on life. There are too many i's in this phrase, but it would take me three minutes to make it better. Let us go on; I no longer go in for such foolery.

I long for the time when, having shriveled up into a few pas-

sions or manias, a disgust with self-scrutiny shall have led me to renounce writing, and thus shall have freed me from the last social bond. It is a delightful thought that the survival of your work should interest you as little as does the survival of your soul. Which does not prevent my proclaiming, in all good faith, that if I refuse, for example, to have anything to do with politics, it is because I only put my money on what lasts. For everything is inconsequential, by reason of the fact that all is but writhings and turnings, with the object of getting out of one's duties and avoiding the slightest annoyance.

Occasionally, in certain places where, under the guise of a sanitary napkin, it for once serves a real purpose, I run my eye over a literary journal. I there read that the young, my beloved confrères, have forsaken the stable for the ephemeral, that they have fallen a prey to unrest, etc. . . . Can it be that, ignorant of everything, out of touch with everything, I without knowing it have been going in the same direction as these young gentlemen? What is this thing that leads men of the same age to come together in certain spiritual movements, even those individuals who are not so fond of foregathering with any chance company?

Bursting-in of everything, covering everything over. . . . The only thing that emerges, solitarily, above this dead napkin, is an isle of pleasures, frightfully sterile when we put in there, but to which distance lends a lure. It is enough that we can still scud along. And yet, we are all of us very well aware that there is no peace where human beings are concerned. I start a loving letter, and I am no longer in love when I come to sign it. I give and get nothing in return. I get and give nothing. If the gift is mutual, it is a matter of chance, and by chance is destined to be undone; it will not be long before we shall be ousting each other from our ridiculous hiding-places. Then, there are those vacillating joys, always moribund, always leading one to question whether they are joys or not, and which can only live their brief moment with the aid of artificial respiration. In order to struggle against lassitude, I should have to manage certain privations. In order to struggle against decline, I should have to be the first to break away, at the most propitious moment, like the player who quits the game after a lucky throw. And nothing in this love is worth what has eluded me. So much for loving, or believing that I am in love. If I go hunting for love, I am as mad as I am satiated; satiated, since all those whom I then meet please me more than those that satiate me,

and I conceive fresh regrets at no longer having the hunger left to desire them. And yet, the majority of mankind are unable to imagine any other happiness except the one having this misery for kernel (and if one is to spend his life in pursuing a blessing which he knows is not a blessing, he might as well spend the same time in pursuing a God he knows is not a God). It is in vain that we discover that none of those to whom we have given the most is an absolute haven of rest for us: there is nothing to be done against hope. With its ears shut to all evidence, a beast waiting for the lash, blind and deaf to all that is not its own immediate concern, it keeps repeating, with eyes shut, repeating in that void which is the future, to a being without form or face: "The peace of thy bosom and of thine arms. . . ."

That peace which is one night to awake against that bosom and within those arms, and is then to learn what it has forgotten in sleep, learn with the force of an explosion, that this being which is worthy of our dalliance is not worthy of our affection, and there will be nothing to do but to clasp it with groans.

"A hope without hope." This is not a witticism; it is reality itself. Where have I come across that expression before? Ah, yes, I wrote it myself (in *Relève*): "a hope without hope." And that was a dozen years ago.

There is in these sentiments a false spiritual distinction that is trite and even, it may be, vulgar. But one is only too glad to have the opportunity of being, for once, just like everybody else.

. . . . .

When the pleasure that one pursues is possessed of a little refinement, there are days, weeks and even months to be paid for a minute. Nine-tenths of our time is spent, amid barrenness, weariness, false moves and a frightful association with intermediaries, in putting together a few charming moments out of life, which, however, are not worth the pain we are at to think them up, and which the slightest unforeseen vulgarity is enough to spoil (the crease in the rose-petal), and which in the future shall seem so dearly bought that one will be led to give up more than one of them, as having been tainted in advance by too much fuss. Neither freedom nor power nor money—who will believe it?—nor a readiness in having recourse to unaccustomed means are sufficient to bring about, nobly and gracefully, those great and harmonious hours between other beings, things and ourselves, when life comes to rival dreams. And

I am fully assured that it is merely a matter of chance if the princes of this world get any more out of it than I do.

The poet plunders the real and makes his poetry out of it. But when he wishes to create the real out of his poetry, poetry becomes angry and evaporates upon coming to earth. "I shall never more come back to earth, I who am the being of your dreams. Find satisfaction in your dreams." The poet says: "Even though I poison the real, I still must try to make my poetry out of it. I am a man, and I will not be satisfied with my dreams." This is the drama of poetry.

All honor to those who are not satisfied with their dreams, and who build for themselves, whether or no, to-be-foreseen deceptions. Today, the places, objects, persons that deceive those who have foolishly dreamed them,—only in them do I any longer find exaltation. "They have cost me three millions and amused me three minutes," remarked Philip V. of the Fountains of la Granja. I have seen in Tunis a ruined city, Mohammedia, which makes a good appendix to the Fountains of la Granja. The Bey Ahmed, in the last century, spent millions to build it, and his exactions in order to be able to erect it stirred up revolts which brought the French into the country. When he had finished it, he grew so tired of it that he ended up by coming to visit it only once a week, then ceased to come at all, and the current of life which followed the court retired from Mohammedia with him.

The destructive genius of the Arabs, kindled, by a spirit of vengeance, led to the sack of the city. Those monumental stairways, those countless windows (the Bey had been dazzled by Versailles), all those majestic edifices which, in the breadth of their conception, cause one to think of Moroccan architecture are now but a heap of ruins, and a city annihilated in sixty years is yet more affecting than that destruction which is wrought by the centuries. Jokingly, I suppose, some one suggested my buying it. Not so bad an idea. That city, slain by boredom, is myself. And these thoughts which I note down here, gloomy and shriveled and all alike, they are but Bedouins who, amid the ruin which they have caused, and upon the débris of splendors which they have not seen, have constructed for themselves a few sordid lairs where they can crouch like mournful monkeys.

More than any state ceremonies, the fact that such feelings as these can be experienced a hundred years after the birth of Romanticism shows how alive Romanticism is today. There is nothing in all this, even to the style almost, which might not have been written a hundred, fifty or twenty-five years ago. Nothing new; worn

to a frazzle. The effect of the War: zero, here as elsewhere. How about it? In the *Chant Funèbre,* I have stated the contrary? No doubt, but like my comrades, in boasting of a supposedly new soul which the War had created for me, I was simply looking for certain rights.

. . . . .

It is a torture this desire for everything that goes by, a desire never satisfied except, sometimes, for an hour, in an animal satiety which does not last. Not to see the tiniest flame without wishing to touch it, to light and put one's self out there,—total darkness would be better than that.

And yet, at the same time, I say that I have no more desire. How solve this apparently glaring contradiction?

By way of correction: it is a torture this desire for everything that goes by, when, knowing that one will only be the more bitter for being cloyed with it, one yet has not the courage to be cloyed, and when one thus walks through the streets for whole days, consumed between the sadness of taking and the sadness of not taking.

Finally, night comes to soothe us: there is an end to all this. And we go back, sterile among the sterile and alone among the lonely.

. . . . .

The transfiguration of the past is one of those numerous illusions (religious faith, for example) which one does not know whether to regard as admirable or deplorable. God only knows what constitutes the charms of memory. The ashes give birth to the flame.

I wrote at Tunis, last winter: "I look forward to the time when, not being at Tunis, I shall want to be there." It has happened. Less than a week after having left Tunis, where I had tortured myself for five months, I made up my mind that I was not so bad off there as elsewhere. The automatism and, one must say the word, the stupidity of our feelings is discouraging. And yet, all we do is pry around inside ourselves and spread ourselves out, at the same time that we are a laughing-stock to ourselves.

. . . . .

What is it, in short, that I want?

The possession of beings that please me, in peace and poetry.

For the rest: to desolidify myself.

Mornings when I go away: Look at them, look at them, those people there! Never more, now, shall you find adventure with them.

Look how beautiful they are, how much more beautiful than those of yesterday, for the reason that they are lost to you.

How could we love the divine face of a Greek statue, if we were so sure as this of the fact that the model would never have had anything but disillusionment to give us.

Each time that I recognize beauty as beauty, I realize that I cannot play with it, and then it does me harm.

. . . . .

Like the ass of the Arabic *norias,* I turn and turn blindly, going endlessly back and forth in my own steps. Only, I do not bring cool water.

. . . . .

I watch with terror the spectacle of my own soul. Behold all that I break in order to be happy, which is my sole concern, and behold at the same time my incapacity for happiness. Behold all that I leave unexecuted. All the enmities which I create for myself. All the time I squander. All the futile wanderings with which I fill my life.

"All that is attained is destroyed? Not ourselves!" Morand cables me from America. I telegraph him back, from Africa: "Alas!" Ah, my dear Morand, hurry up with the undertaker. The Pasteur Institute is vanquished. We shall have no further need of antisepsis.

One only consolation. It is neither things nor humans who have conquered me. The universe, society have nothing to do with the case. In succumbing, I could take their measure if I pleased. All has been given me. All has been forgiven me. I was capable of doing everything, and am capable of doing everything yet. Inasmuch as it is I who have turned up my nose (and shall I one day be given credit for all that I have spurned?), it is only by myself that I am vanquished. *Nemo contra deum nisi deus ipse.* In myself, and in myself alone, as yesterday and always, is that which I fear and that which I hope. And so, let none pity me, but rather envy me, since nothing that comes from myself can be evil, and I feed on my own ashes.

You think, perhaps, that I am making phrases. And all that has been said before.

. . . . .

"You gave us once a song of life, and now you bring a song of death."

"There is a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted," saith the Preacher.

Tunis-Algiers, 1927.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

SOCIAL, ANTI-BOURGEOIS AND ANTI-BERGSONIAN REVOLT

(1928–1929)

In France, social revolt as manifested in literature very often does not exist in the pure state, but assumes other forms, is tinged with metaphysics, aestheticism, etc. In Jean Guéhenno and his *Caliban Parle,* it is perhaps most visible. It is often hard, too, to separate social revolution from the revolt of the sons of the bourgeois against that bourgeoisie from which they have come. The two tend to meet and mingle in such a writer as Emmanuel Berl. One of the developments of the latter half of the decade has been a rising revolt on the part of the young social-revolutionaries against Bergson and the philosophy of flux. A deliberate and philosophically sustained Marxist attack on Bergson has been made by François Arouet, in his *La Fin d'une Parade philosophique.* M. Berl, similarly, has attacked the theory of the unconscious, as in the essay of his given below.

For a consideration of social revolution in contemporary French literature, the reader may be referred to an article by Mr. Harold J. Salemson on "French Letters, Left Face," in the Spring, 1931, number of *The Left* (Vol. I., No. 1).

Jean Guéhenno

Jean Guéhenno, since the death of Léon Balzagette, has been, with Dominique Braga, the editor of the revolutionary organ, Europe. *Mr. Salemson describes him as "one of the outstanding left-wing essayists of France, the spokesman of the proletariat." His* Caliban Parle *("Caliban Speaks"), in which he depicts the proletariat under the guise of Shakespeare's famous character, is a work*

that is deeply moving in its sincerity. It was published in 1928. Other works, published or in preparation, are: Portrait de Lénine; Adieu Jeunesse; Le plus humble des Européens.

CALIBAN'S MISSION

(From *"Caliban Parle"*)

I have been very often tempted to correct the portrait which it has pleased Monsieur Renan to paint of me. But whatever I say, he is the one they will believe. The creations of philosophers and of poets are truer than reality. Caliban he has made me, and Caliban I shall remain. And yet . . .!

Was it not his conception that Ariel and I were quite incapable of understanding each other? Everything in the way of an ideal vexes me, he said, tortures me, plays on my soul like a bow on the strings of a badly tuned violin. I was that elf's drudge. I hated him. His very presence aroused in me a vague anxiety. But why did he not go on and describe the delights of that torture! How many times have I called to Ariel! According to him, my pleasures are Saturnalian. He has depicted me as a crouching slave, degraded by the fact of slavery. But if slavery is degrading, is Monsieur Renan the one to be reminded that it sometimes kindles celestial ardors, and that, once at least, it prepared souls for the coming of a God?

"Revolution is realism," he said, and that is true. But might he not equally well have said: "Revolution is idealism"?

I am the artisan and the dupe of revolutions. Such is my destiny. Ah, how far I am from being that conqueror whose triumph he depicts. I assure the victory of others, but am myself never victorious. The revolution over, I find myself at the palace gate, like a discharged servant. That is in accordance with the protocol; they do not look upon me as sufficiently distinguished. It is the same comedy that has gone on for a long time now. When I have torn up the bricks in the street, climbed upon the barricades, seized the Postal and Telegraphic communications, and, merely by showing my face, have routed the Prefect of Police and the Minister of the Interior; when I have unfurled from the pinnacles of public monuments, like a mason proud of his accomplished task, the banner of the new régime;—when this has been done, a Gentleman comes up to me, followed by various notables, thanks me, grasps my hand, delivers a speech whose theme is my ancient virtues, and then, prettily, to the strains of the national anthem, shows me the door,

with no end of adjurations to go on home in well-behaved fashion. As for me, deeply moved by the great things I have just accomplished, and bursting with pride at having shaken a pair of white hands, I proceed to shed tears over my own greatness, and, prompted by weariness, I do as a matter of fact go back to my own street, the obedient servant of the new *"homme possible,"* until the next time.

I am one of those men who governmentally are known as "impracticable." A man who is too honest is almost always an impracticable man. In order to be "practicable," one must not have too much imagination, and must be able to speak of the miseries of peace without visualizing them, of the horrors of war without shuddering at them. If only the miseries of peace and the horrors of war were to become in themselves impracticable, and we could have an end to fine speeches and charitable works.

A great man in the government is not too much concerned with the public good, and is sufficiently indifferent to public misfortune. He makes the best of what is. Is it his fault if men are so cruel and so stupid? He is like a player with a hand dealt him by chance. He must play his hand. The thing is to win the game. He must sometimes put up the stakes, and that may amount to twelve million human lives, as was the case in a recent little poker-game in which everybody lost.

It is all too clear that I am not that man. The cards impress me as never having been so well shuffled. I am always asking for a new hand. I would be glad to change the face-cards. I am foolish enough to want Justice to deal them. And then they call me cheater.

. . . . .

Here they are, big property-owners, big manufacturers, rich and our masters. And they give themselves the air of Prosperos.

For if they are not Calibans, they must be Prosperos. Because they live in palaces and make their flunkies wear his livery, they think they deserve the same respect. To hear them tell it, they hold the keys to sacred mysteries; they bear in their pure hands the feeble, flickering flame of civilization, and it would be criminal to interrupt the procession. In reality, all they are after is money; their hands are filthy with juggled bullion, and their keys are good for strong-boxes only. M. Renan did well to observe that the mess might last, and that one might "go far with that disease." It is still lasting. But in God's name, do not say that it is the reign of Caliban. It is the reign of trapeze-performers. Never, it is true, was there

so much talk of civilization, of culture; there are a thousand holy catch-words on the tongue. That is a part of the game. That is the way Tartuffe spoke of Heaven.

There are some who say that I have my share in all this. I might make the best of it to my own profit; and then, there would be no more people, no more Calibans. I should myself turn bourgeois and fix my dreams on a good bowl of soup, a high salary, a suit of new Sunday clothes, a few free tickets to the celebrations my masters give. Supposing that this were true, how great then would be my defeat.

The truth is, there are folks who are unable without surprise to behold me satisfying my hunger. My sordid misery appears to them a providential institution. I am made for devouring crumbs and for wearing out old clothes, and it is an offense to God and man, and I am guilty of overturning the divine order, if I bestir myself in the direction of happiness. If I eat my fill, and if I go to the movies, they shout bourgeois, being ready to despise in Caliban the very things for which they esteem themselves. They and I like good wine, but it is for them to play the gourmet; I can only gulp it down as a drunkard. When they thus remark that I no longer exist, they are, I am quite certain, endeavoring to buck themselves up; they deny me in order that they may not have to fear me. And then fear, which soon grows too strong for them, obliges them once more to recognize my existence. They thereupon closet themselves to slander me and heap insults upon my head.

It seems to me sometimes that I am living a mythical, legendary, eternal, innumerable life. I attempt to go backward down the stream of time; and it is then that, a man without a history, I relate my history for myself, the history of my ancestors.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Emmanuel Berl

Emmanuel Berl is a young editorial-writer recently converted to Communism. His Mort de la Pensée Bourgeoise *("Death of the Bourgeois Mind"), published not long ago, created a sensation and gave its author a certain position as leader of the revolutionary anti-bourgeois forces. This was followed by* Mort de la Morale Bourgeoise *("Death of Bourgeois Morality"). M. Berge has had something to say about Berl in his Introduction to this section.*

THE BANKRUPTCY OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

To begin with, a bit of history. Excuse me. The Unconscious is a born materialist. From Cabanis to Maudsley, it has been expressive of the belly, the abdomen, the menacing herd of muscles, and all that multitude of tiny perceptions which the mind does not go on to elaborate. It was, for right-thinking individuals, an object of disgust. No more consciousness? . . . Very well, then, no more morality! Might as well subscribe to the code of literary naturalism.

But since Maeterlinck and Bergson, since Wagnerism, which with us is prolonged by Debussyism, the unconscious has been converted. Whether modernist-Catholic or liberal-Protestant, it becomes spiritualistic. An attempt is made in the name of the unconscious to support those values which eighteenth- and nineteenth-century criticism had impaired. Spiritualism loves to annex words. And seeing that the historic God of the Bible was threatened by Renan, Maeterlinck's unknown guest comes along to uphold the *petit-maître* of Fénelon and the Mystics. Whence, if I may say so, the apologetics of William James, the old superstitions denounced at once by Church and Science calling in to their aid the old stupidities.

One can see very clearly in Bergson the manner in which the thing slips in. Bergson began upon very solid ground. He said:

"We have no longer any more reason for believing that the memory is preserved in the brain than we have for thinking the opposite."

And anyway, the human problem involved is not one as to where the memory is preserved, but rather as to how and why we remember. All memory is preserved; that is a fact. The difficulty lies in understanding why, at such and such a minute, we recall certain things and not others.

By way of contradicting Broca and having done with the "cerebral circumvolutions," he goes on to assert:

"The memory is preserved in the unconscious."

The unconscious means so little to him that he finds himself in agreement with Doctor Marie, who does not mention the unconscious, but who denies localizations. The trouble is, Bergson was little by little ensnared by his own metaphor. Soon, like Taine, who visualized practically every memory as nicely lodged in its cerebral cell (there was even a discussion as to whether or not there was a shortage of accommodations), Bergson came to visualize the mem-

ory as residing in the unconscious. Buzzing like molecules of gas, he believed "that they pressed against the door of the consciousness." Now, to assert, without knowing, that the memory presses against a non-existent door is no better than saying (without knowing) that it finds lodging in Broca's circumvolutions. It simply means that one prefers one sort of imagery to another.

From being a residue, the unconscious becomes substance. The Bergsonians, in the grip of the demon of ontology, picture it as a whole, of which consciousness is a very small part. And at the very moment that they are engaged in denouncing spatial images, the Bergsonians go from "smaller" to "less valid." After that, one could not heap insults enough upon the consciousness and the reason. It was the end: the Unconscious at last had rallied to the Absolute.

A fine harvest of microbes; success came. Women of the world, college boys, the débris of Symbolism, the disciples of Brunetière, office-assistants proclaiming the bankruptcy of science because their physicians could not succeed in curing their constipation, café-hounds endeavoring to get out of mathematical courses through Henry Poincaré's relativism, and out of literary courses through Rimbaud's poetry, apprentice-Pastors striving to reconcile reason and faith, M. Émile Boutroux' pupils—all these proceeded to clutter up the Bergson classrooms (I remember the horrible odor), and Bergsonism ceased to be a thing of the mind, to become, as the saying went, "a thing of the soul," a sort of theosophy, steering a crafty course between the various creeds.

And out of this, an artistic metamorphosis. Musical, literary, pictural Debussyism. Everybody adored—Melisande, symbol of the soul, Carrière, painter of the soul, and all the sub-Impressionist rabble. Everybody went to Bayreuth to gorge on the Unconscious. Great Buadelaire period, on account of the *"correspondances."* M. Bazaillas wrote: "Music and the Unconscious." And there was also the Slavic soul.

All this was due to end in 1914. The War prolonged it. The Armistice let loose a whole battalion of artists, who explained the Unconscious, painted it, explored it, and finally sold it, after having wrapped and labeled it. The young poets went in for automatic writing, an exercise which up to then had been the exclusive property of second-rate mystics. So great was the confusion that Cubism, which had begun as a reaction to the Unconscious, was in the end converted to it. The Catholics alone, thanks to M. Maritain, let modernism go at this point, and went back to reading St. Thomas.

But the theosophists played up the Unconscious for all that was in it. Religious archaeology and exploration of the dream. Just as Levy-Bruhl had given us negro fetiches and Josephine Baker, and as Dostoievski had given us the Caucasian cellar, so abstract painting now proceeded to cover the walls with dreams.

. . . . .

This fashion is over. The phenomenologists of Freiburg are no longer concerned with the Unconscious. Nor are the behaviorists. All thinking persons in Europe are repelled by the silly satisfaction which comes from not understanding a thing. Other masks must be found with which to disguise the corpse of dead beliefs; other pretexts must be found for denying the real and human appearance of this world. The "unknown guest" takes his place with Potemkin's icons, in the second-hand-accessories-shop. The dealers in religious trappings will no longer be able to cover their risks with the negro or pre-Columbian fetich. The death of the Unconscious will produce a profound transformation in literature and in art. A transformation of which our present weariness is sufficiently prophetic. "What is the Eiffel Tower?"—"A bushel of fleas."—"Why don't snails fly?"—"Because the albatross has hidden the old general's *ratelier* in the Bovril box."—Other varieties of lyricism must be found! The snobs themselves will soon cease to be interested in the mystery-mongering wood-engravers and sculptors of the Unconscious.—They doubtless will stop bothering us with their totems, their coincidences, their fatidic numbers, their presentiments, their horoscopes.

The intellectuals will no longer remark, expansively: "Very mysterious!" Which is equivalent to saying: "I've become an utter moron!" I can see a wave of clarity coming up to sweep away these morphine symptoms. The Unconscious is dying. It has been in the picture business, and now finds a sale only in Belgium. There are, it is true, still a few *littérateurs* left who cling to the idea if they multiply their birth-numeral by the number of letters in their first name, and then divide the figure thus obtained by their street number, the sum-total will be twice that in the case of Victor Hugo. But this no longer impresses even the poor Carpentras college-boys. There are, in the cafés or the sanatoriums, a few Marxist poets who believe in a clairvoyant revolution. And a few of Mme. de Guermantes' nephews still subscribe for a few de luxe copies of *La Parfaite stupidité* and still purchase a few Cubistic epigons. Their

aunt, meanwhile, is buying Le Sidanier's and Henri Martin's. But all this does not prove that this species of art is still in existence, but rather, that it has ceased to exist. The destiny of some is always to take the next-to-the-last for the last word. They loved Delacroix when they refused to look at Renoir. They loved Renoir when they refused to look at Matisse. And they have come to love Cubism exactly at a time when Cubism has lost all meaning.

Let them try to read Husserl, any of them, let them listen to the lesson of the latest philosophers, and learn what it means to know what one is talking about—when one talks. They will soon be following this fashion. It is a good place for them to begin. The aesthetic to come is one of signification. Just as I recently predicted, in the pages of *Bifur,* the coming financial crisis in the United States, so I predict to them, with the same certainty, the end of the Unconscious, the retreat of mystery, and the liquidation of what is commonly known as "modern" painting. Notice to collectors! Keep your eye on the dealer!

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *The New Review.*)

FOR A METAPHYSICAL "REVELATION"

(THE "PHILOSOPHIES" GROUP)

M. Berge, in his Introduction to this section, has perhaps said all that needs to be said concerning the "Philosophies" group as it formerly was known, the "Esprit" group as it now is called, led by Pierre Morhange, or "John Brown." This group insists upon the need of a new metaphysics to counteract the ills of the age; they call for an "absolute Realism" and a "metaphysics of totality." Their bent would appear to be mystic and affective; their revolt against the age is, it may be, more interesting and more significant than their "metaphysics" or their as yet not forthcoming "revelation." It has seemed that the group might be effectively represented by a couple of poems by its leader, Morhange.

RAINY-DAY POEMS

(*From* "Poèmes du Mauvais Temps")

By Pierre Morhange
(John Brown)

THE JUNGLE

My thoughts breathed like animals.
The dazzled face of the sky was torn away like a bit of ordure.
Rain, come stiffly on each plant,
Under the dark thicket, I am like a bird's wing.
I have seen the gleam of the two spear-heads fastened and beset,
I have heard the cry of the two gleaming birds,
I have had beside me the cross-eyed dog,
I have been afraid of the frogs that went down into the water.
The crow has come to seek me and has screamed upon discovering me
He waited long, flying near me
To see if I would yield to him.

O ruined plain
O distant city, sweet country.

At each movement a sound of chains!
I hear cries in the warmth of the sand:
Of the animal at the slaughter?
Or of the tranquil devourer shouting at each thrust?
In a storm the cattle cry as they do in the sun, but less.
Everything was moaning save the breastplate of the black insects that burrow in the earth.
The frog was more patient than I.

GALLIA

Let us remember well that roomful of men
Which will be repeated tomorrow.
They differ from one another only in their hair
And in the jawbone of their maliciousness.
To the right of their habitation stretches the little meadow of their perversity
To the left the little meadow of their generosity

To the right the mist of their pride
To the left the wind of their grief
To the right the odor of their coarse-grainedness
To the left the light of their mother
Under the earth the push of their passions
And their country is their gross humid flesh with shifty eyes
Eyes on flesh and flesh behind flesh.
There are fields where plants do not grow
There are fields where the wonder-plant never grows
And its scattered seeds there perish.

"NOTHING IS LEFT US"

(DISCONTINUITY)

1928

The suicidal despair and defeatism of the decade reaches a climax, or touches bottom, in 1928, with the manifesto of the *Discontinuité* group. This manifesto, given below, appeared in the opening number of a magazine of the same title, under date of June, 1928. The directors of the magazine were Ar Adamov and Claude Sernet. Among the writers and artists in the first number, we find: Monny de Boully; Serge-Victor Arnovitch; Victor Brauner; Jean Carrive; B. Fondane; Fernand Lumbroso; Georges Malkine; Dida de Mayo; Michonze; Georges Neveux; and the American Man Ray.

THE DAWN IS NOT A SWORD

It is in vain that we scale the steps of knowledge. Near or far, necessary or not, we are always waiting for an Event, we are looking for a fixed idea.[1]

Today, in asserting that none of our hopes is strong enough to be enunciated, we find ourselves unable to share or to understand the optimism of certain ones, the very ones who ought to be the

[1] To depart is no longer for us a fixed idea. Linen, food, nostalgias, we are afraid of lacking everything, of becoming powerless. As for love, we cannot speak of that; it is the sole eventuality that is realizable. However odious the discussion may be to us, we shall not carry it to its maximum of repulsiveness. One does not discuss love.

most despairing; today more than ever, we are whirling around in a warehouse of agony, from which we despair of ever being able to emerge,—from lack of will, but, above all, from lack of a real despair, such as, undoubtedly, would lead us to suicide.

We are not afraid of repeating the worst commonplaces, when they correspond ever so little to the better part of our intelligence. We therefore assert, after thousands upon thousands of voices have spoken, that if one does not commit suicide, it is only out of cowardice, and we ask not to be bothered any more with hope's chariot and all its train.

But we know that we shall never go so far as suicide, we do not isolate the cause from the effect, it is not the void we love but that which precedes it; we love, during the night, to have the sensation of falling, to strike with our heavy hands our lifeless faces, but we cannot see *anything else,* we cannot be *otherwise.*

The truth is, we know that nothing, absolutely nothing, is worth the game. If we go on publishing, it is not merely because, surrounded by the fabulous depreciation of words, we still believe in words, but because, here too, there is nothing else to do. Sailors with our hands full of sand, we are unable to act, and so, we resign ourselves, we abandon all vanity, we confess our defeat.

For we can still distinguish defeats from victories, but that is not the question, since it is impossible for us to make deductions.

This obvious lack of intellectuality, this lassitude, are things that we cannot give up. To give up anything whatsoever, one must have a belief in abstract and general ideas. But we do not believe any more. If we hate scepticism, we hate still more dogma and premeditation. In our opinion, *the most frightful thing* after all is the fact of not being able to act with ease.

Frequently, reflecting deeply enough but still without following our thought to the end, we find that we do not even admire any more the Revolt of man against a ferocious and always identical society.

We are not Revolutionists in the sense in which we ought to be,[2] we politely remove our gloves while the hierarchies of values fall in

[2] It is not a question of spirit, but of a risk to be run, a very simple, physical risk. We are in nowise disposed to diminish the idea of revolution, despite all the shameful falsifications it has been compelled to undergo. No more than the huge majority of the C. P., no more than the Surréaliste group or Morhange or Politzer, no more than any one in France, do we risk anything—we risk nothing or almost nothing. We are not, then, revolutionaries; if we were, we should certainly not be here.

a confused eddy. The balance is no more to one side than to the other. Whatever we do, we shall always be like ourselves, whatever we do, we shall always be surrounded by water and by snow.

Nothing is left us but love for the night and our desire for purity.[3] And yet, we go from abdication to abdication, as one moment follows another. Our life, in short, is only a question of adjustment. One should be in line with himself and with eternity, there is no other factor in the case.

We shall discover life, when nothing any longer, neither its skin nor its body, shall be able to find a correspondence with the fever that is ours. Our fever,—it has really lasted for quite too long already. We are growing tired. We like the crumbs.

On the gaming-tables, beautiful or calloused hands are seeking the sensual and electric current which is our misfortune and our grandeur.

Nothing is left us.

DISCONTINUITY.
(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of *Discontinuité.*)

IN WHICH A REVOLVER-BULLET ENDS A DECADE

JACQUES RIGAUT

1929

On November 5, 1929, Jacques Rigaut, a young man who had been more or less vaguely associated with the early Dadaists and the later Surréalistes, who had got himself known as a "character," who had talked much about theoretic suicide, and who had been made the none too flattered hero of Drieu La Rochelle's *La Valise vide,* shot and killed himself. This event is not so comparatively

[3] For long, we believed in the possibility of a revenge. We will explain ourselves: we were persuaded that we might avenge ourselves, that writing would be our revenge for all the concessions exacted by life. Once again, we were wrong! We make no effort to conceal the fact: *Discontinuity* is not pure. It contains lines which we could only tolerate out of friendship, weariness or disgust. (*Editor's Note.*—"Discontinuity" here refers to the magazine published by the group.)

unimportant from the point of view of the literary historian as it may at first sight seem. It in a manner, and a theatric manner, brings the after-War decade, with all its young suicidal defeatism, to a close.

Here was one Dadaist-Super-Realist who put the thing into practice. That revolver-shot comes as an exclamation point that ends the sentence. The literary happenings that follow look forward to a new decade, possibly a new era. It is the turning-point.

Rigaut, who made a habit of destroying what he wrote, published but two articles during his lifetime. One of these, a remarkable document, appeared in *Littérature* for December, 1920, and is reprinted in *La Révolution Surréaliste* for the 15th of December, 1929 (following the author's death). In this article, Rigaut observes that "suicide is a vocation"; it seems to have been his vocation.

The facts of Rigaut's life are sufficiently set forth in an article by Jacques-Émile Blanche which was published in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*. This article, given below, is in itself a document, showing how the "young man of the century" appeared to a highly sympathetic member of an older generation.

In *La Nouvelle Revue Française* for August, 1930, "Lord Patchogue" was published, from Rigaut's posthumous papers. The latter's manuscripts were disordered and undated; but there would appear to be two periods: one from 1920–1924, covering in part his first trip to New York; and one from 1927 to his death; with an interval during which he does not seem to have written. "Lord Patchogue" belongs to the second period. From 1928 on, Rigaut had planned a work of which Lord Patchogue was to be the hero. He identified Lord Patchogue with himself, and even had visiting-cards engraved with this name.

In the same number of *La Nouvelle Revue Française* (pp. 251–255), see an article on Rigaut by M. Victor Crastre.

The after-War decade may be said to have begun and ended with a suicide: Jacques Vaché; Jacques Rigaut.

A YOUNG MAN OF THE CENTURY[1]

(JACQUES RIGAUT)

BY JACQUES-ÉMILE BLANCHE

"I formed the decision and, at the same time, I very precisely recall, I formulated the only reason there was: And then, no go!—

[1] Title supplied.

I got up and went to look for the only weapon in the house, a small revolver which one of my grandfathers had bought, loaded with equally old bullets. (It will be seen a little later why I stress this detail.) Lying naked in my bed, I was naked in my room. It was cold. I hastened to get under the covers. I could feel the cold steel in my mouth. At that moment, it is likely that I felt my heart beating as I had felt it beating when I listened to the whistling of a shell before it burst; but it was no use; I had irreparably bungled the thing; the gun had not gone off. I then rested my arm upon a little table and probably smiled a bit nervously. Ten minutes later, I was asleep. I believe that I have just made an important observation, if it can be—naturally! It goes without saying that I did not for a moment think of pulling the trigger a second time. The important thing was to have made up my mind to die, and not the act of death. . . ."

In the interval between this contemplated suicide and the real one, there was a period of ten years, more or less, during which I cared for Jacques Rigaut, as for one of those wayward sons for whom a mother, a father, his sisters are every day led to fear the worst. Having learned of the mysterious suicide of one of his forebears, he believed that he was the victim of a fatal heredity; his days were numbered, so why not taste all the *nourritures terrestres,* why not find an alibi in the *paradis artificiels* . . . ? He took little trouble to hide from us his excesses of folly. The catastrophe struck me as being inevitable from the day I made the acquaintance of this charming personality at the house of a friend who, almost jestingly, suggested him as a secretary. Rigaut was glad to have it known that he was "employed by a writer," in order to ward off the threats of a very bourgeois family, bent upon "putting into business" an idle and spendthrift youngster whose upkeep was ruinous.

Upon coming back from the trenches, he still had to put in a few months of barracks-duty. Very proud of his apprentice-warrior's lack of sensitivity, this hypersensitive young man boasted of having had no feeling whatsoever as he saw his dearest comrade drop at his side. A haughty attitude and, what is more, one quite in fashion at the time in Dada circles. My first glimpse of him was in the shadows of a study, where M. X——, weird thaumaturge, a professor of rhetoric by profession, was evoking for a disconsolate brother the spirit of an officer who had fallen at Verdun. The hero was to appear seated upon a chair that was waiting for him. My horror at this occultism would have led me to flee the macabre scene,

had it not been for Jacques, who was looking on with some credulity, I fear. As we left, he laughed "a bit nervously," as he usually did. It was his little way of warding off a sneer when overcome with emotion.

"Sir," he said to me, "I may impress you as being too *gigolo,* but I beg you to give me a trial anyway."

He had begun as secretary to Abel Hermant. Their daily relations had not been altogether smooth. Jacques Rigaut, being on the look-out for a job that would not require his getting up so early in the morning, and which would assure him of more leisure, had fallen back on me. Happy telepathy—and how very right he was in not listening to those who would have dissuaded him from putting a fatal confidence in me. . . . Never was there a more delicate nor a stronger friendship between two individuals with so little between them and of so great a difference in age.

This quite unrestrained father-and-son friendship he soon chose to extend to the other members of my family. We have a number of his letters, full of spontaneity, brimming with affection, with gratitude, and with entreaties, when he felt himself too alone in that artificial and unbreathable atmosphere which he had created around him. We may see here the other side of Surréaliste impassivity: "To live, that is to say, to accept life, to laugh, to love, to rejoice, when everything seems so wretchedly bound down . . . in this acceptance lies all there could be in the way of the ridiculous, and our life can only take on a real meaning by setting out from an idea in which it is wholly swallowed up and lost, the moral idea." (*La Révolution Surréaliste,* 1929.)

The moral idea harassed Rigaut. He was the most scrupulous of young men. He died from an excess of scruple. The horror of filthiness was in him from his childhood. Let no one be mistaken concerning the purity of his motives when he was engaged in committing "scandalous" and laughable actions, which were no more than the absurd braggadocio of a mild and timid being. He asserted that to ask for a thing instead of taking it constituted an unbearable humiliation. It would seem that he was born humiliated. . . . And so, he proceeded to swagger in his dandy's detachment.

But am I not wronging his Legend, that wax-image which he, out of modesty, fashioned of himself? Am I not betraying him by depicting him like other poor flesh-and-blood creatures with eyes for weeping? Our superman, with us, took off his iron girdle. When we reread one of those two pieces which are the only ones he

published,—upon the first of which Edmond Jaloux had based so many hopes,—how can we help being moved by the frankness of the bad boys of the Dada era, of whom Rigaut was the most naïve and the greatest stickler of them all, seeing that he destroyed all his manuscripts. Who is not struck today by the substantial quality of the fragment which appeared in *Littérature* (December, 1920)? ". . . and what a sight, that mob struggling to get out of the Gaumont-Palace, after I had set fire to it! This evening, you have nothing to fear, the fancy has taken me to be serious. There is obviously not a word of truth in this story, and I am the best little boy in Paris." Like real revolutionists, Jacques abounded in truculent truisms, which he dressed up in black and shiny velvet, taken out of Hamlet's wardrobe.

Ashamed of his scrawlings upon odds and ends of paper, he would tear them into tiny bits, blow on them and sneer. I am not sure that this was not done out of bitterness, a proud resentment. He felt himself at bottom more a literary man than any one, he who was filled with disgust at the thought of soiling a blank page, and so rigidly exigent regarding the quality both of the thought and of the form—he who preferred such absurd pastimes as collecting match-boxes with pictures of female dancers or guitar-players and other ridiculous trifles. From ironizing over the stupidity of others, he had contracted the same mania as a Flaubert being metamorphosed into an Homais and a Buvard. Jacques Rigaut was too intelligent not to be alarmed when he caught sight of himself in the glass-mirror of a skyscraper corridor, surrounded by millionaires' wives, among whom was his chosen one.

"I shall be serious as pleasure. People don't know what they say. There are no reasons for going on living, but no more are there any reasons for dying."

(A point of view, alas, which he was one day to abandon.)

"The only manner left us in which we can evidence our disdain for life is by accepting it. Life is not worth the trouble of leaving it. One may, out of charity, ward it off for certain others, but for himself? Despair, indifference, treasons, fidelity, solitude, family, freedom, gravity, money, poverty, love, absence of love, syphilis, health, sleep, insomnia, desire, impotence, platitude, art, respectability, dishonor, mediocrity, intelligence, there are no fish there to fry. We are too well aware of what these things are made to be taken in by them: good to inspire a few negligible accidental-suicides. . . ."

From a certain moment on, all the decisions of his day depended upon a throw of dice, which he carried around with him. He played cards, knowing that he would lose: this conviction, which gradually took hold of his mind, confers a tragic meaning upon the sudden end which he put to his irritable impatience, to his period of waiting for the resumption of a conjugal life—and which may have been, above all, due to that creative work which he felt stirring inside him, and to which nothing short of a Cesarian operation could have given successful birth. But what was his message? The friend who doubted whether Rigaut had anything of importance to say to us,—how sorry he now is for having, in his character "Gonzague" in *La Valise vide,*[2] given us a portrait that is disturbing in its external life-likeness, but basically inaccurate, and over which the betrayed model was so pained, although he "laughed a bit nervously" at it all.

There was little of the metaphysician in this youth. If he took himself for a disciple of M. Teste, he impressed me as being just the opposite. When he would bring his Dadaistic comrades to my house, and when I would compare Rigaut's Latin face and American get-up with theirs, I became conscious of the fact that the path he had chosen to follow was not his by instinct. Which would *get* him, Dada or the Ritz? In the meanwhile, I was grateful to him for making me acquainted with some equally remarkable young writers, in whose company it seemed to me that I was once more meeting philosophers, bespectacled professors and neurologists of the sort among whom I had grown up in my grandfather's house. Amid such an areopagus—the Council of Ten or the Public Health Commission—Jacques' charming *dandysme* was out of place; nevertheless, he was something more than a listener.

Theoretic suicide which was already the mode, and which was to become one of the leit-motives of *Surréalisme,* had left its funereal mark on him, even to his affectation of "accepting" life of the most conventional and futile sort. He did not align himself with any group. Indeed, he was never more than a spectator at the public performances and public team-play of the Dadaists. But his fantasticality, his attractive singularity should have led them to claim him as one of their own. "He who had humorously conceived the idea of suggesting to rich American families that they have the wooden crosses on the battlefields transformed into marble crosses, —he who killed himself on the 5th of November, 1929, in an

[2] See Drieu La Rochelle's *Plainte contre inconnu.* (Editor.)

absolutely methodical fashion,—he does not expect of us, his friends, those phrases which he himself would have been little disposed to utter over a grave." Such is the chronological notice that appeared in the review conducted by his former comrades.[3]

The question has been raised as to what his production would have been. On his table, shortly before he armed himself with a revolver, a couple of visitors noticed some notebooks—a theatrical piece—if some believed that Rigaut could do nothing, this goes to prove the contrary. He was a psychologist of an astonishing delicacy and subtlety. Would he have written a short denuded novel? With little imagination and no inventiveness as regards plot, being wholly self-absorbed, would he have given his contemporaries an appendix to the *Adolphe* of 1815?

We believe that he had, if not any important messages, at least some very interesting things to say to us, quite as interesting as those uttered by any of his congeners. If we have employed the word *dandy,* this should not shock those who take it in the strict, altogether French sense, of elegant bearing; there are all sorts of dandyisms as there are snobisms; the "demeanor" of Jacques Rigaut toward literature and the amorous life, and in his relations with individuals, was that of a humorist, of one who is making a show of himself.

Certain of us have put to ourselves the question: in what field of present-day life might he have "realized" his character? We are agreed that it would have been in a chosen circle of men and women who were used to his game, and who would have held the key to it. He would have come to it sooner or later, after having kept us waiting some little while. Between cocktails, he would have uttered an amazing phrase, and then would have disappeared like a shadow, satisfied with having produced an exotic impression. For this, on various planes, is the tendency of dandies.

The void he has left behind him shows the number of persons by whom he was looked upon as worthy of being loved.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *Les Nouvelles Littéraires.*)

[3] *La Révolution Surréaliste,* No. 12. (Editor.)

LORD PATCHOGUE

By *Jacques Rigaut*

BEFORE

Here is Lord Patchogue.

The room, those four walls, are uninhabitable. One must get a move on. One does not know any more what streets to avoid, those that one knows because one knows them, those that one does not know for the same reason, or for another. I suspect my shoe-soles of not having been made for these sidewalks, my legs for these trousers, or my patience for this waiting. High deeds, low deeds, acrobatics, records, the most difficult is breathing.

All passions are external.

. . . . .

Two legs are not enough for assuring Lord Patchogue's equilibrium. And if you were to offer him a recipe for equilibrium, would he not spurn it as a more mortal danger?

This reign of error round about, these enthusiasms which are like drownings, this order which is like my father's A B C's, what succor have they to lend the onlooker's assurance?

. . . . .

And if I affirm, I question yet.

. . . . .

For an eye quite open, there is no difference between winning and losing. If there is nothing to win, what can one lose? The devil has passed this way. They've already picked up his trail, a gray and very pointed wing at the hour of grace. Lord Patchogue is intoxicated with the execrable vanity of losing. Each opportunity finds him on the spot, it's the only appointment he has. To diminish, to atrophy—from less to less—what drunkenness. The sign—a national anthem, the password of the lodge-brothers of the heart. Every month, if not every day, finds him less fitted to cope with the necessities of bestirring himself, of getting out of himself, of making discoveries; attention rusty. These perspectives, these forbidden panoramas, the contemplation of his shell, will it make amends to him? He smiles: "I shall soon have it down to a single word."

He has taken refuge in cowardice; every man has a dignity of his own.

. . . . .

He is not afraid to talk, providing it is about himself, and to a single listener. About himself, there's modesty in that, even though you do not see it. A single listener is not to be feared; one would not despair of being able to persuade the Pope to go in for counterfeiting, in a tête-à-tête. More than one is too many; an understanding smile between you, and Lord Patchogue is disarmed, panic-stricken; for when there is more than one of you,—and two is enough,—you can do and undo, make and remake the world. It is obvious that in an insane-asylum, there is one madman, a single one, the superintendent.

. . . . .

Note: In an analogous case, although under different circumstances, Lord Patchogue spent six whole months exclusively occupied with a creature who could have for him only the very slightest interest. Love, comfort, sense of unity, money, there was nothing to expect of her. What was more, he had opportunity to learn how extremely boring she was. Which did not prevent him, during those six months, from being solely devoted to her; he had ceased to see his friends, with the exception of two or three with whom he could talk on the subject. A fancy for monsters such as is undoubtedly at the bottom of this episode is not sufficient to explain the persistence of an interest so disinterested. And then, later, he lost all contact with this female fornicator, and he is incapable of restoring . . .

. . . . .

Lord Patchogue who knows how to find his way without the aid of the senses. The five illegitimate senses. Interest, which is to say having a stake, the promise of comfort, of pleasure, of discovery.

. . . . .

I make no pretense to indifference or non-participation. I blush like any one: blush with warmth, grow pale with cold, am ready to box some one on the ears if he steps on my corns. You would have no difficulty in surprising me in all sorts of emotional and other misdemeanors.

Don't confuse me with my sorry adventures!

. . . . .

I cross my legs, I strike this muscle under the knee-cap, and my leg leaps in the air. *Where do I come in?* [4] And yet, you will be saying that it is I who have moved.

[4] In English in the original. (Editor.)

In this operation, where do you place Lord Patchogue? What's his part, what's his rôle?

. . . . .

Lord Patchogue is like every one else, that's understood. He is the first to tell you that, which is not letting himself in for a great deal. All those around him, it goes without saying, would be too indolent to doubt it, if there were not in his affirmation a certain violence to awaken their suspicions.

Lord Patchogue answers to his name.

He does not take himself for anybody else, however strong the temptation may be. And yet, your ten fingers are not his own, and that point between his two eyes is not the middle of your face. You stand up: is it really you? Perhaps it is he? Not much chance.

He has been seen in different jobs, in different hats; he has kept neither one nor the other. Lord Patchogue has not been faithful to an ambition, to a desire, not even to a vow. To succeed, there must be two things: ambition, desire or a vow, and then some one. If Lord Patchogue doubts his own existence, he merely takes up his borrowed one.

Lord Patchogue runs to assure himself in front of the glass that he is still there; not really he, but his nose, the nose that he saw on himself a few minutes ago. It is not so much his own existence that he doubts as the existence of each of his attributes, and if not their existence, their legitimacy.

. . . . .

When he was making love, he used to shout his own name, as if striking at an adversary, like another way of spilling his seed.

. . . . .

Indolence wins over affectation. A few years ago, and you might have been able to catch Lord Patchogue in the act of self-defense against tastes, preferences, choice. Misdemeanors of taste.

. . . . .

Lord Patchogue smiles as rogues smile. Those things pay.

. . . . .

His longing is probably that of every other man, at least everything that enables him to forget that he has none. It would be enough to have desire. But Lord Patchogue has no desire to have desire.

II

PASSAGE THROUGH THE GLASS TO OYSTER BAY

He is seated at a table, busy playing patience. Does he exist? He is between two cards, then he is the passage from one card to another; it is at this moment that the universe is laid low—nine of hearts on the ten of clubs. It's done. Lord Patchogue raises his head, the universe is reanimated. The supers, in another corner of the room, kick up a noisy row.

On the opposite wall, in a huge mirror, Lord Patchogue catches sight of his image: "I recognize you. I do not take you either for an ostrich, nor for a reflector, nor for our friend Charles. You are Lord Patchogue's image, even if you are not Lord Patchogue himself. Ah! which of us was the first to stir? Which follows the other?

Lord Patchogue rises. He studies himself as he stands in the mirror. Five senses are not enough for his neighbors of the moment; they are going to miss the show once more; they are no more ready to perceive the proximity of a mystery than they are to think of death.

Lord Patchogue and his image come forward slowly, one toward the other. They look at each other, they bow.

What dizziness has laid hold of Lord Patchogue? It was brief, easy and magical: with jutting forehead, Lord Patchogue has bounded forward. The glass is crashed, pierced, flies into splinters, but he, here he is on the other side. . . .

Every one gets up.

Marvels are not rare, incredulity is stronger than miracles. Miracles have difficulty in beating up their witnesses, so small is the number of those who are disposed to take the side of the supernatural. Lord Patchogue was the first to feel some doubt about the step he had taken.

None of those who crowded around him was aware of their friend's surprising disappearance. They surrounded him as if he were still there, they could recognize him, they could hear his voice.

There was, nevertheless, some uneasiness. Why had not Lord Patchogue been more seriously injured? That single fine cut upon his forehead was not enough; one does not step through a mirror with impunity; that is not in the order of things. Every one would have been reassured, had he been able to count the countless and

properly bleeding wounds. A single person, the one whose business it was to preside over the balance of the evening, suspected, it may be, the fatal nature of that slender red band scrawled across Lord Patchogue's brow.

A miracle does not travel alone; it knows what is befitting, and goes accompanied by extraordinary accessory manifestations. However conscious they were, Lord Patchogue's companions, though they may smile at it today, did not fail to indulge in singular actions.

Why did Simon pick up, bit by bit, the broken fragments of glass, which he placed one at a time upon a wide tea-tray? Why, when the operation was over, with a gravity which caused his face to look obviously more like Lord Patchogue's than his own, did he bear his handiwork, a little arrangement of crystals and splinters, into Muriel's room, where she already lay stretched out with her feet bare—and place it on the bed?

Why did Muriel begin treading the splinters of glass as if she were dancing, as if she were sacrificing, and why above all, in spite of her violence, did she draw up her feet without a cut?

Only Lord Patchogue's forehead was bleeding imperceptibly.

Douglas went out to vomit. The rest began praying.

The next day, workmen came to replace the glass. By the time they finished their work, Lord Patchogue had disappeared.

III

BEHIND THE GLASS

Waiting, less than a speck.
The inside is as good as the out, depend upon it.

. . . . .

How stop him? I know everything he will say to me. Enough, enough. I can anticipate his gestures. Keep still, old dear, I know what you will be saying to me tomorrow, I know you inside and out, north, south, hot, cold; enough.

Keep still, old man. To whom are you speaking? You are alone; my ears are yours, your tongue is mine, you are alone, a madman frightens me.

"The love-affairs of my friends. . . .

" . . . are my love-affairs. I can complete every sentence for you."

. . . . .

Overcome with weariness at his post of observation, with the cer-

tainty of discovering nothing beyond a confirmation, Lord Patchogue comes back; a mirror is behind him, and it is still Lord Patchogue who is looking at himself. Each says to the other, with a fright that grows as their glances meet: "I am a man who is trying not to die"—and for the second time, Lord Patchogue darts through the glass. Crash, splintering glass. Lord Patchogue stands facing a new mirror, facing Lord Patchogue. On his forehead, the cut is bleeding once more. Lord Patchogue repeats: "I am a man who is trying not to die," and as he passes through a third mirror, to a sound that is by now familiar, he knows that he is going to meet Lord Patchogue whose forehead will bleed more in the fourth mirror which will say to him: "I am a man who is trying not to die." He knows now, all he can do is break glass; eye that looks at the eye that looks at the eye that looks. . . . The man who is trying not to die darts forward; he strides automatically, without curiosity, without "affectation," for the reason that he cannot do anything else; at each step, a new mirror flies into splinters; he walks surrounded by this crash which is sweet to the ear of the damned. At each mirror, he scans: "eye—that looks at the eye—that looks at the eye—that loo . . ." Lord Patchogue stops. The board-walk is but a shattered mirror, that is to say, walls and ceiling. Pretty landscape; walls and ceiling lodge the best way they can amid the débris of glass.

Lord Patchogue's plan is formed. So much the worse for the firstcomer. Waiting. At last a sound of approaching steps, caged and stealthy steps. There is some one in the room, some one who remains at a distance from the mirror. But is the call of the mirror to be in vain? No, here he comes. . . . Curses, it's a woman!

"It's a frame-up! Get out of here, little sugar-plum! On to the next one!"

She admires herself, professionally. Passive, out of commission, Lord Patchogue gives her what she asks. What love, what lovers, what not . . . The young lady is accommodating. Watch her running her hands over her breasts. Lord Patchogue docilely accompanies her gestures. It takes nothing less than this, the running of his fingers over two young foreign globes, to bring him back to himself. Under her chemise, his fingers remain cautiously fastened at a woman's throat. He feels her distending as she breathes, he is conscious of her lukewarmness.

In adjusting her stocking, she exposes a leg with that sort of anonymous precision which is conferred by the assurance of being

free from all observation. Lord Patchogue, in obedience to his unexpressed vows, gives her a leg of love.

Is the transformation to stop at the bust, or rather . . . A burlesque uneasiness lays hold of Lord Patchogue; so imperious is the superstition of virility that, in place of hoping to acquire a new sex, Lord Patchogue, with a hasty but exemplary gesture, assures himself that he has not ceased to be a man.

As he gets ready to breathe, a shout in his face . . . For alas, the young lady, passive in turn, can do no less than copy Lord Patchogue's gesture. And what a discovery! Peculiarities which only marriage should have revealed to him. She did well to flee, the wretch, toward what dreams . . .

. . . . . .

On this side, there is no way out, there is even no possible progress; the scale of eyes is an infinite one; the captain of the last eye sports on the horizon. In his presence, it is enough to go through the glass backwards, all precautions naturally being taken. A kick with the heel to begin with. That is easy; but does not this mean going back to the peak of his hat, and the nine letters of his name; are they to wrap themselves about his neck like the chains on an identification tag? Undesirable. The walls; there are the walls; Lord Patchogue goes over, touches them with a finger, leans against them; how does it come that the mirrors offer no less resistance to his effort?

Young stranger, your hair is rumpled. To put it in order, little insignificant insect, you come up to the glass. Look out, Lord Patchogue has a plan. But what is the use; the wind that has disarranged your locks must have received very definite and authoritative instructions. The bold one stops; on the other hand, Lord Patchogue is getting ready. Like a runner trying out his muscles before the race, making sure of their suppleness, he raises his two hands to the level of his cravat, and the subject does the same. Everything is going nicely. At intervals, he tosses back his hair, and the subject does the same. Lord Patchogue is sure of him up to now. He turns his head slowly away, in such a manner that the mirror eludes the victim's observation, and then, with an unexpectedly quick movement, he hurls himself to one side, against, into, through the wall. When the subject turns his head, there is nothing to do but realize that he has taken Lord Patchogue's place. The inside is as good as the out.

. . . . . .

Dialogue or Alternate Monologue of Lord Patchogue and the Callers:

It is I whom you are looking at, and it is you that you see; you are incorrigible.

My ten fingers are not yours, and this point between my two eyes is not the middle of your face. I rarely suffer when some one strikes you, and no more do you for me.

. . . . .

Each mirror bears my name.

My secret: I am on the other side of the glass. The 20th. of July, 1924, at Oyster Bay, in the house of C. S., I have accomplished this feat: I have taken a slight leap and, with jutting forehead, I have gone through the glass. I have witnesses. It was easy and magical. A slight cut on the forehead, an imperceptible injury.

From now on, in place of each mirror's bearing my name as before, it is I who answer you from the other side, it is I who instruct you, it is I who model you. Alone I am little less than a dot, but in your presence, effortlessly, unmaliciously, I am you, I am you; you find it hard to believe, and you hasten to make a face; that is probably why they say that I am affected.

Sign your name, alive, at the bottom of this mirror, put it there with a burin, providing that in your name there is no p, nor t, nor e, nor h, nor o, nor g, nor a, nor u, nor c.

Just like at the photographer's: "Smile, I'll do the rest."

. . . . .

My friends' love-affairs are my love-affairs.

There is not a deed, not a dread, not a smile that does not belong to me. Under any circumstances, whatever the manner in which I have reacted, I do not believe that I could have reacted in a manner wholly opposite. That ensemble of acquired facts which constitutes my experience is of no succor to me, since on every occasion I have had the feeling that, without the slightest twist or turn, I might have acted differently.

IV

EVASION

The impossible, freedom, impossible freedom, providing only there are no more questions. . . .

Lord Patchogue displays a body which offers the same resistance, a body that you recognize. The voice is the same as the one you have heard, and those slashed features are the same; that vulnerable air has disappeared, that defect through which your own mortal breath could pass. The mechanism is similar, and the eye does not cease to transmit its observations to the eye on the top rung, and those observations travel from eye to eye, unceasingly.

. . . . . .

A prison—look at yourself.

. . . . . .

AND NOW, REFLECT, MIRRORS.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of *La Nouvelle Revue Française.*)

FRENCH POETRY TODAY

The state of French poetry at the end of the decade, it would seem, may be amply represented by the work of three poets, Cocteau, Tzara, and Valéry, standing for three outstanding tendencies. Cocteau's "Angel Wuthercut" (*L'Ange Heurtebise*) was published in 1927. Tzara's "The Owls" (*Les Hiboux*) is from his *L'Arbre des Voyageurs,* 1930. Valéry's "Footsteps" (*Les Pas*) dates from earlier in the decade, but is good Valéry.

ANGEL WUTHERCUT

By *Jean Cocteau*

I

Angel Wuthercut, on the tiers
Of emery of his wing,
Wracks me, refreshes my memory,
Fierce, alone, unmoving
With me in the agate,
Broken, ass, by your pack
Astonishing.

II

Angel Wuthercut, with unbelievable
Brutality falls upon me. Please
Don't fall so hard,
Bestial boy, flower of tall
Stature.
It's given me a malady. What
Manners are these? I've the ace in hand; you see.
And you?

III

Angel Wuthercut coaxes me;
And you, Lord Jesus, afford me grace,
You hoist me, draw me to the right
Angle of your pointed knees;
Unblended pleasure. Folks! Unknot
The cord before I die.

IV

Angel Wuthercut and angel
Gesturis killed at war—that name
Unheard-of—play
The part of scarecrows
Whose gesture *no* puts fear
Into the cherries of the celestrial cherry-tree,
Among the stark rows of the church
Accustomed to the gesture *yes*.

V

Angel Wuthercut, my guardian angel,
I guard you, wuther you,
Butt you, change
Your card, your weather.
On your guard, sunlight! I defy you,
If you be a man. Accept,
My ceruse angel, your beauty
Photographically caught by an
Explosion of magnesium.

VI

Angel Wuthercut, in watery robe,
My beloved angel, my grace
Aches. I've an ache in
My God, he tortures me.
The demon in me is a tortoise, once
A melodious little snake. Come,
From out the agate
Hard smoke, oh! speed that kills;
Upon your diamond runners pierce
The invalids' looking-glass.
The walls
The walls
Have listening ears
And mirrors
Have a lover's eyes.

VII

Angel Wuthercut, abound, aeroplane
Marrow of eldertree and alabaster cloth.
The time is here. You must still
Come down to help me, head
First, past the glass
Unflawed of the eyes, the vacuum, isle
Where sings the hearth. Out with your sword,
Come in slow-motion mad star.
Why have I not your body? Oh!
If we but had your hips
Stone-draped, mean
Ladybug a-bounding.

VIII

Angel Wuthercut, with the animal feet
Sky-blue, has come. I am alone
Quite nude without an Eve, without mustache,
Without a part.
The bees of Solomon
Depart, for I cannot get through with my honey
Of bitter thyme, my Andes-honey straight.

Down below, the tide this morning is uttering
A hundred times the verb to love. Cotton-batting angels,
Indecent, dirty things,
On the grass milk the udders of the great
Geographical cows.

IX

Angel Wuthercut, I've won:
Anger, the figure 13,
Counter-grainwise mix
Your white sheens,
Swell your sails in a
Nice new fashion.
Never, lessons, did I like: I learned
At any price,
The tributaries of the Oise, the names
Of boughs of trees, the grain
Of month of May.
Fowler you're losing your gal; you'll learn it was
Better to tame statues.
They're pals of birds;
Marble bows a very great weight.

X

Angel Wuthercut, say Ave Maria.
One foot on the tortoise, the other on
The wing, means juggling with
Feather and cannonball.
I had faults, I admit; we came together
After the fast. Angel Wuthercut, the earth
Half-sun, half-shadow is just like a
Panther of the jungle. No?
Well, I'm sure of it and bid you
Withhold your mirth. You have
Blood upon your beak, young man.

XI

Angel Wuthercut, in the Rue d'Anjou,
On Sundays, plays at missteps
On the roof, loops limping

Hopscotch, a-flitting like magpie
Or blackbird, his cheeks aflame.
Remember, call me thou.
Wuthercut, my handsome
Cripple, we're being spied upon at right.
Hide your beads, your scissors;
They must not kill you,
For killing you each month
They don't kill you but me.
Angel? Fire? Too late. Aim, angel!
Fire!
He falls shot dead by the soldiers of God.

XII

The death of the angel Wuthercut
Was the death of the angel, the Wuthercut
Death was an angel death,
An angel Wuthercut death,
A mystery of the exchange, an ace
Missing from the deck, a crime
Embraced by a vine, a stock
Of moon, a swan-song that bites.
Another angel replaces him that I
Did not know the name of yesterday;
Latest news-bulletin: Gesturis.

XIII

Wuthercut, o my swan, open
Your unsure hiding-place. A fig-
Leaf put upon the soul
Immodest, I purchase you
For the Louvre, whether America
Likes it or not.

XIV

Wuthercut do not start
Any longer from my soul, I accept,
Do as you must, beauty.
How pale is the happiness we crave,
How fine the hardship that we own.

Do as you must, beauty.
Hair of Wuthercut angel, heavy
Male scepter, danger of water,
Of milk, maid-trunk delivered nice,
To the sight of this elegant animal
On the darting map: tomb of mine
In the island of fingers wide apart.
Hardship wears a seven glove.

XV

Angel Wuthercut, the butterflies clap
Their hands weakly despite the cloud.
The valves and auricles of the heart,
Flower of the aorta, anthracite,
Hurricane of cardinal points.
Riggings of the night,
The moon is eavesdropping at the doors.
The rose is ageless,
It has beaks, and gloves,
And papers mention it
With the acrobats
That night and day
Exchange lovelessly.

Report

During the night of . . . on the Quai . . . The angels:
Wuthercut, Elzevir, Sunday, Gesturis,
After doing . . . did . . . of the feminine sex . . .
It would seem . . . despite the hour . . .
The ladies saw . . . a diffuse light . . . the ass . . .
Pretended to . . . a wing . . . by the iron
Handle . . . on the mouth . . . the atrociousness
Of the gesture.

Run in, they refused
To confess a thing; of course.

(*Translated by* HAROLD J. SALEMSON.)

(Courtesy of *The New Review.*)

Note.—The foregoing translation has been authorized by M. Cocteau, who, however, wishes it stated that the internal rhythms of the poem are untranslatable.

OWLS

By *Tristan Tzara*

morganatic avalanches married to grave undulations
of millenary concussions
the ampoules gone with the reflections of the age
the stages of sound
waves striding the sad eye of a lake
the ear is nourished by the fall of water
muscled and constant
the firmament grows big in its specter
women's hats were suspended from the branches
variations stolen from games of chance
and that which would cure the belated hour
a bird
would wallow in the fat sound of belfries
growing with the valley

along the leprous chalk road
three characters were striding
each a bundle on his back
the pines were whispering
the fans of the garnished clavecins
of the length of a simple afternoon wind
each of the three characters was listening to the melody of his name
curled with telegraphic portatives
andre henri ovide and ludovic
the first
galled by a superfluous love
delighted in the ideas which strove to penetrate
his resistant and his burnished skin
a sewing-machine of infernal cells
crackled in his ambulant sleep.
he went to catch a train which his family refused him

the second
slight smile of sea rains
he left on the roads of dark

he has found lakes where god flows away in american pleasures
they followed closely the outlines of his drawing
smoked like a cigar
a form grew into a magic scolopendra
the other is a chair
an open book makes grasshoppers' wings
why do we stop
before the door of a second-hand cloud-merchant
why does the blood drip from that gyroscopic eye
but all is a lava stream
there is neither good nor bad nor great nor small nor right nor left
as if from his index major there flowed pencil black
of his varied seconds of his sleeps without problems
like cerebral evasions during sea dreams
the lace is tied over strange propositions
faded great-coats without heads
you ask if you would spend the night pleasantly
there is nothing mystical
nothing of gross and vulgar wisdom
dramatic prophets
nothing but a play of life and its varied scripts
about the stability of ciphers
is there a difference between the serious and the light
is god serious or heavy light or witty
he knows
that we are the nocturnal exhalations of a sinister fantasy
nocturnal exhalations
nocturnal exhalations?
yes nocturnal exhalations
five-o'clock-tea exhalations
exhalations
nocturnal? yes nocturnal
absurdities and inelegant toads
a pastime the marriage stalk
and the shop-windows of the gods hidden in shoes
I have said to the dead man
you intimidate me white friend of the white adjoining crystals
but he whirls about my window in a water bubble
and knocks against the panes like a fly

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Paul Valéry

As a poet, M. Paul Valéry began as a disciple of Stephane Mallarmé. Born October 30, 1871, he is now nearing sixty years of age. Nevertheless, as we have seen, he has a significance for the decade. After a silence of twenty years, devoted chiefly to a study of the exact sciences, M. Valéry, in 1917, with the publication of La Jeune Parque, *entered upon a new poetic career which, some while since, has become a matter of literary history.*

Anything in the way of a detailed criticism of M. Valéry's poetic work would be out of place here. However, one may perhaps mention the poet's well known addiction to mathematics, as having paved the way to a view of life and art which we find expressed in such works as the Introduction à la Methode de Leonard de Vinci *and the* Soirée avec M. Teste. *His art is one marked, preeminently, by a disdain of the facile, and by a certain classic restraint and passion for order. His is, essentially, a cerebrally motivated art—poetry has been defined by him as "a solemn festival of the intellect."*

Among the most celebrated of the Valéry poems are the Cimetière Marin, *1920 and* Le Serpent, *1922, of which the latter has been given a resplendent English rendering by Capt. Wardell.*

M. Valéry, in reality, belongs to a tradition which, through Racine, Malherbe and others, goes as far back, philosophically, as Descartes. He was elected to the French Academy in 1925, where he took the chair left vacant by the late Anatole France. The Valéry prose, likewise, is inevitably a reflection of the author's fundamental thought. La Soirée avec M. Teste, *published as far back as 1896, has had a profound influence upon many of* les jeunes.

Other items in the Valéry bibliography are: Album de Vers Anciens *(1890–1900), 1920;* Odes, *1920;* Charmes ou Poèmes, *1922;* Eupalinos, *1923;* Variété I., *1924;* Variété II., *1930.*

The extreme difficulty of translating Valéry makes it possible to give but a brief sample of his work as a poet; while Valéry the prosateur is fairly well known to English readers.

THE FOOTSTEPS

(*Les Pas*)

Your footsteps, children of my silence,
  Holily, slowly, in pace
Approach the couch of my vigilance,
  With a mute and frozen grace.

Being pure, shadow divine!
  How gracious are your steps discreet!
Gods! . . . all the gifts I could design
  Come to me on those naked feet!

If, with those moving lips of yours,
  You now prepare appeasement
For the one behind my thoughts' barred doors,
  A nourishing lips' easement,

Do not hasten the tender act,
  Sweetness of being, not-being sweet;
For I have lived but to await the fact
  Of you: my heart is in your feet.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

SPAIN

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SPANISH LITERATURE SINCE THE WAR

By *Jean Cassou*

The intellectual renaissance of modern Spain dates from 1896. This date, which is that of the Cuban disaster, brought home to an entire generation the need of a stock-taking, the need of attaining self-consciousness and of achieving, at the same time, a contact with Europe. The whole question of Spanish culture and the worth of that culture was thoroughly threshed out. According to some, Spain's most imperative duty was to come out of her lethargy, that species of provincial solitude in which she had shut herself up during the whole of the nineteenth century; those who held to this view kept repeating the phrase of the great economist, Joaquin Costa: "We must put the sepulcher of the Cid under double lock and key." According to others, Spain's duty was to go more deeply into herself, into the study of her past and of her strong but concealed spiritual tradition. It was only by a haughtier affirmation of her own personality and originality that she could hope to leave her mark once more upon the world and attain to universality. To the question, "Should Spain be Europeanized or Africanized?" Miguel de Unamuno, who was violently in favor of Africanization, went further yet by replying: "We must Hispanize Europe."

These two polemic tendencies were the ones that animated the so-called Movement of '98 (*Noventa y Ocho*), and it was they that inspired the whole of the pre-War literature. The representative writers of this movement were energetically interested in a vast field of culture; their curiosity was unbounded concerning the ideas, feelings, and the modes of contemporary Europe. All the while, they were engaged in rediscovering, beneath the dust of oblivion and the commonplace, the great national values, talents forgotten or unknown: El Greco; Baltásar Gracián; the Mystics; the Conceptualists; the Baroques; they found a new meaning in *Don Quixote,* that Spanish gospel; they discovered Castile.

Out of all these questings and all these meditations there sprang a new and extraordinarily vigorous system of ethics, a true *philoso-*

phia hispanica, deserving of a place in the great scheme of European civilization, and worthy of representing there certain spiritual values as important as those contributed by French, English, German, Slavic or Scandinavian culture. All this was accompanied, in the universities, by an academic renaissance, which resulted in the shedding of light upon Spain's Arabic past and its Roman past, and in the formation of centers for scholarly labor, research and fraternity. One might compare this movement as a whole to that which sprang up in Germany following the Napoleonic wars, in the days of Romanticism, in the days of philologists, folklorists and metaphysicians.

The greatest figure in this movement is, without doubt, that of Miguel de Unamuno, the author of *The Tragic Sense of Life* and of the *Life of Don Quixote and of Sancho*—the figure of a master and of an apostle: dialectician with a lightning-like gift of language, of passion and of paradox; mystic and romantic poet; orator and agitator of the sort that sweeps all before him. In accordance with the trend of public events in Spain, this figure took on a representative magnitude and all the human sonorousness that was in the man. It will be recalled how he was exiled under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, and the triumphal return which the Spanish people and the youth of Spain staged for him after the downfall of the dictatorship. Contradictory, absurd, uneven, cynical, violent and magnificent, Unamuno is the most human and the most Spanish of Spaniards. And none, at the present moment, is younger or more audacious than this superb poet of more than sixty years.

Other names in which the generation of '98 glories are those of Azorin, Pio Baroja, the essayist Ramiro de Maetzu, the great poet Antonio Machado, and Ramón del Valle-Inclan.

Azorin, unlike Unamuno, is a silent and a modest man. He is the poet of the inner life, of the life of dreams, of leisurely and circumspect landscapes, of little Castilian villages drowsing in a sun-drenched oblivion. But he shares with Unamuno the gift of youth. Thus, in the years which have followed the War, he has completely overhauled his subject-matter and is now producing work such as a young poet might sign, work in which one senses an emotion born of contact with Joyce, with Proust, with Freud, with Rilke, and even with *Surréalisme*. His later works are veritable epics of the Unconscious. The solitary meditations of this charming prosateur have grown deeper, wiser, more subtle; they are now plunging into the mysteries of creation, and are there discovering *spiritual castles* as

poetic and as weird as those which St. Theresa discovered in the course of her mystically ascetic career. Another comparison: Azorin's present works are a prelude to literature, just as the works of Joan Miró herald a painting that is to be, and worlds which are being born and taking shape.

The novelist Pio Baroja has not gone so far in his evolution. He remains always himself, which is to say that his is a temperament possessed of an inalienable originality, highly forceful, colorful, contemptuous, and quite in keeping with what one can only call Spanish bad humor. He writes *à la diable,* but what he has to say is always incisive and unforgettable. He is crabbed, cynical and without hope, under all his bustle and his free and easy air. He is adorably ingenuous, brimming with prejudices; and yet, he is the freest of men. None, at least, strives more strenuously for freedom nor is more concerned with being free. In this, he is akin to Stendhal: in his atheism, his contempt for style, his speed, his sentimentality at once peevish and repressed. He is a prodigious draughtsman of picturesque and extravagant types.

Ramón del Valle-Inclan is, on the other hand, an artist, a painter, a musician, in the sumptuous style, fond of archaisms, a genius in love with legend, and himself a legendary individual. Finally, with the rare and mysterious poet, Antonio Machado, who lives far from the madding crowd, in his impenetrable retreat at Segovia, we have done with the generation of '98, one of the most fertile periods in the history of Spanish literature.

Outside this movement, there are those novelists who keep up the realistic tradition, and who keep their contacts with the public at large. There was, for example, Vicente Blasco Ibañez, the most famous writer in Spain, the most popular and, for a long time, the only one whose fame had crossed the Pyrenees. There is little to add to what is already known of this impinging personality, regarding his tumultuous life, his adventures, his political struggles. He resided almost constantly outside of Spain, and belongs not so much to Spain as to the world. Nevertheless, he was eminently Spanish; his was the true conquistador's temperament: generous; eager for risks and for independence; fond of all that is splendor, life and color;—in short, an authentic Mediterranean.

The writers who followed the generation of '98 have evinced far less of a preoccupation with the *National Problem.* They impress us as being freer, less affecting, less distressed. One of them, and not the least illustrious, has devoted his life as a writer to opposing

the Spain of '98, his work being a reaction against black Spain, against Castillian and mystic Spain. Allusion is to Eugenio d'Ors, an athlete of the intelligence, a Mediterranean and classic genius, discoverer of a Spain that is lucid, encyclopaedic, universal, European and even French. Endowed with an essentially plastic mind, he is one of the best aestheticians of present-day Europe. But his work is not limited to aesthetics; it embraces all subjects, all problems, and makes its appearance as the philosophic *Summa* of an ideal age, in which Reason shall have triumphed over nightmares and the powers of darkness.

Ramón Pérez de Ayala is a humorist, a stylist, the possessor of a mind that is at once academic and dangerous, an incomparable painter of provincial life, a satirist of an astonishing verve and vividness. His *Belarmino y Apolonio,* his *A.M.D.G.,* his *Tigre Juan* are still among the best books to be found in Spanish literature, the most savory, the cruellest, the most delectable, and the most profound. Ayala's style is sinuous, Jesuitical, contorted, delicious, perfidious, and all his own. Of all living writers, he is undoubtedly the one who most clearly stands for certain classical, exclusively Spanish traditions, —the realism of the first half of the nineteenth century, for example, or the satiric literature of the Golden Age. He is an eminent sample of what the Spaniards call *casticisme,* a word applied to that special flavor which certain essentially Spanish things possess, and which is not to be encountered elsewhere. His work has an oily flavor of the kitchen and the sacristy.

The work of Gabriel Miró is not so tart to the taste; he is all suavity, and his creations are as sweet and succulent as a convent tart; they are as tender and voluptuous as the Alicante paysage in which they were born, and where they still go on living and singing, despite their author's recent death.

Finally, with the poet Juan Ramón Jiménez, an Arabic bard, in love with pantheism and perfection,—with Jiménez and with the marvelous and dazzling philosopher, José Ortega y Gasset, we come into speaking distance of that younger generation to which they stand more or less in the position of masters. A true prestige surrounds Ortega's name; he acts as an excitant to minds, and aids their unfolding. The founder and director of the extremely important *Revista de Occidente,* he receives vibrations from all of Europe's intellectual activity. He has been responsible for the introduction of the latest German philosophy into Spain. He is interested in anything that may produce mental restlessness and provoke discussion,

and his essays are masterpieces of art, intelligence, diction and rapidity. He is, at one and the same time, proud and generous, open-minded and imperious, and, all in all, a good deal more Spanish than he may appear to be at first sight. But generally speaking, it may be said that, with him, we find ourselves in a Spain that has its windows thrown wide-open to the surrounding universe.

The young generation, then, finds itself in contact with Europe, and in love with an ideal of clarity, of selection, of intellectual dignity, of elegance. This generation, it goes without saying, is at a far remove from the tragic dynamism, just a little barbarous, that characterized the atmosphere of '98. It is quite natural that its members should have abandoned those vaster enterprises, preferring to devote themselves to art in its most concise and intellectually finished form. And so it is, we find a whole new school of poets, headed by the distinguished names of Jorge Guillén, Pedro Salinas, Federico Garcia Lorca, and Rafael Alberti. Jorge Guillén, a cultured poet, has gone to school to those difficult masters, Góngora and Valéry. Pedro Salinas is a musician, simpler and more pliant, an author of *lieder,* a charming *intimiste.* Lorca lends his voice to the popular Andalusian and gypsy muse. Lastly, Alberti, under the influence of Surrealism, has published a series of poems, *On the Angels,* marked by a beauty that is new and intense. With these names, one must mention: Gerardo Diego, formerly one of the founders of the Ultraist movement, and one of the finest poetic intelligences that there is; Luis Cernuda, an astonishing virtuoso; Vicente Aleixandre; Damaso Alonso; Rafael Laffon; José Maria Hirojosa; Rogelio Buendia; etc.

Criticism and the essay, however, still continue to provide employment for many talents. The Spaniard, a talkative and paradoxical person, expends in journalism the treasures of his mind, finds play there for his ingenuity, and frequently displays his depth. I am, by way of instance, quite happy that Salvador de Madariaga, a trilingual writer, should have given us, as he has, observations on the comparative psychology of the Spaniards, the English and the French that are amazing in their verity. Among the young-generation essayists, one must mention the versatile Vicente Espina and, especially, E. Giménez Caballero, founder of the *Gaceta Literaria,* who applies to Spain the most luminous methods to be found in the intellectual world of today. His tours of Europe, but more particularly the care with which he maintains the bonds that unite the various groups of the Spanish *imperium* (Catalonia, Portugal, America, the Jews of Salonica), may have the most far-reaching effects upon the

future of Spanish thought, upon its trend, and upon its healthful vigor. Caballero has a daring, jovial and captivating mind.

There is likewise much glamor and novelty to be found in the work of the young novelist, Benjamin Jarnés. There is, in short, a revivifying breath in the intellectual life of young Spain. It may be that these manifestations are not unaccompanied by a certain dispersion of Spanish energy; but Spain is a reservoir so rich in energy and in originality, and so potent with it all, that any such apprehension as this may be banished from our minds. And when all is said, how can one help finding in the work of a young thinker such as José Benjamin, one of the deepest expressions that Spain has to offer? Benjamin possesses one of the most abrupt and singular minds of his generation.

And then, above all, there is the work and the personality that dominate all literary Madrid today, the work and the personality of Ramón Gómez de la Serna, the great Ramón, the man of sixty books, the new *Spanish Monster,* the inventor of the *Gregueria,* the inexhaustible *fantaisiste,* who has his word to say on everything in life —in life and in death. Ramón Gómez de la Serna is the finest example that there is of Spanish vitality. With his romanticism, his fecundity, his picaresque realism, his unconstrained and exuberant fervor, he is of the opulent Spanish past, and Goya's heir. At the same time, he is an incarnation of the lyricism of modern life: a dazzlement in the presence of the faery aspect of that world in which we live, the feverish mystery of the cinema, the magic of extravagant and absurd police-items. He is the creator of a new mythology.

One could not more appropriately bring to a close this picture of the literary Spain of today than with the countenance of Ramón. It is he whom I should like to take as a symbol of this young Spain, so old and so vivacious, and which holds so much of the future within its hands. This barren land, lying abandoned at the tail of Europe, yet so rich in spirit and in depth,—this land has given birth to twenty republics, and its language is spoken over a continent. New literatures are being begotten and are forming there, are already flourishing, transformations are in the air, and new civilizations are in preparation. Spain is not only Spain: it is a moral fact, a cultural value, a spiritual force. If one looks at it from this point of view, one cannot deny the transcendent significance of that renaissance which we have been witnessing for fifty years, and which is still going on, with a continuity that is so assured. This renaissance sinks its roots deep into a marvelous past; it means a rejuvenation of mean-

ing, in the written word and in deed, the establishment of a close and narrow bond; and it opens up horizons that are boundless. We are thus brought face to face with a syncretism that is called upon to play an enormous part in the formation of the man of tomorrow. The Spanish genius is one of the facets of universal destiny.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

A NOTE ON M. CASSOU

M. Jean Cassou, author of the foregoing Introduction, who is in large part responsible for the selection of authors and excerpts in the present section, is not only a creator in his own right, but, a critic of distinction, of fine and discriminating taste, he is an indefatigable student of Spanish literature and of Spanish life, past and present, and speaks with authority on the subject. In addition to his *Panorama de la Littérature Espagnole Contemporaine,* published in the Kra series, he is the French translator of Ramón Gómez de la Serna, of Unamuno, of Eugenio d'Ors, and of Cervantes' minor works. In Paris, he is to be seen at the Saturday night gatherings of the Spanish colony in the café de la Consigne, opposite the gare du Montparnasse, where Ramón is the presiding genius.

S. P.

1918—SPANISH LITERATURE—1930

By E. Giménez Caballero

I

The dates 1918–1930 are cyclic ones for Spanish literature. They are possessed of a conclusive significance.

Spain was a neutral country during the war, in all things except one: literature and art.

With the signing of the Armistice, in 1918, Spain was as yet unable to realize that what had brought a European economic era to a close—the Spanish writers who came at this time will be found drawing upon the international bank—was, precisely, that same consciousness of something that had just died and something about to

be born which existed in our own literature, in the form of a gestation parallel to that which was taking place in the rest of Europe.

There is one word that inclusively describes—accurately yet vaguely—this period in Spain, from 1918 to 1930. That term is the word: VANGUARDIA. (A term which definitely applies to that whole stretch of a dozen years that followed the War in Europe.)

VANGUARDIA: What, exactly, is "*la vanguardia*"?

II

What is the *advance-guard*?

One of the most typical advance-guardists of the world—Marinetti—in renewing recently his historic activities as a propagandist for Futurism by flinging out a new slogan, "The Futuristic City," found that the first thing he had to do was to classify all the advance-guards (Orphism, Cubism, Dadaism, Simultaneism, Creationism, Constructivism, Suprematism, Imagism and Ultraism).

The very process of effecting such an *a posteriori* classification reveals the fact that the advance-guard movement has become sufficiently historic to necessitate a museum.

Advance-guardism as a genetic force may be looked upon as dead and done for. If it were not dead, would there be so much anxiety to divide up the spoils and come into the legacy?

Marinetti believes that Italian Futurism was the sire of all the isms, while Tzara is to be heard soliciting for French Dadaism, the Germans for Expressionism, and the Chileans, through the mouth of Guillermo de Torre, for Creationism.

Few literary movements have been so variously defined as has the one known as Advance-Guard.

"Advance-Guard" was a term applied to literature by the literary minds of the Great War.

"Advance-Guard" seeks to describe in direct fashion the shock troops, that literature which goes ahead and opens up the way.

Secondarily, however, "advance-guard" has a less precise signification: "free literature"; "vital urge"; "internationalism."

The "advance-guard" was essentially a movement in the direction of human solidarity, a casting off of shackles and a quest of the infinite, a new romanticism.

The contemporaries of the Great War took account of the fact that the instruments of production and of destruction were the same for

all. Of the fact that war was an illusion, that there were no frontiers, and that the nationalistic myth was an unimportant puerility. Likewise of the fact that the various peoples were capable of understanding one another through metaphors and images. (As for "Esperanto," it rather resembles a Futuristic or Dadaist text.) The train, the shell, the telegraph, the ocean-liner, the palatial hotel, globe-trotting, crowds, ball-rooms, the cinema: themes for the new poetry. . . . But the years rolled by. . . . The Italian Socialists, the Italian Futurists, the Russian Bolshevists, the German Expressionists discovered that the glory of construction was superior to that of destroying. Mussolini created Fascism, Marinetti married and is bringing up children, Tzara has become a fireside burgher, Gomez de la Serna holds the Puerta del Sol at Madrid to be the navel of the world. Cocteau casts an eye on Catholicism. And the Russians have their N. E. P.

This new European spirit has been characterized by Benjamin Crémieux as a "spirit of reconstruction." A sort of Reparations board.

III

THE ADVANCE-GUARD IN SPAIN: ULTRAISMO

Taking Spain as a concrete example, what has been the evolution of the advance-guard movement?

The best means of forming an estimate of this evolution would be to read the first three years of the *Gaceta Literaria.*

The *Gaceta Literaria* was founded on the first of January, 1927, at Madrid, with myself as director and with Guillermo de Torre as editorial associate.

Of these two elements, the advance-guard one, properly speaking, was the second: Guillermo de Torre.

Guillermo de Torre was the author of a book entitled *"Literaturas europeas de vanguardia"* (1925), which has come to serve as a collection of archives and a vade-mecum for the new groups in Spanish America. (To this book is due the popularization in Spain of the word, *"Vanguardia"*).

In this book, Guillermo de Torre studied the origins of Spanish advance-guardism, which made its appearance in literary circles under the name of *"ultraismo,"* in January, 1919 (or in the immediate after-War period).

Ultraismo manifested a desire to provide the impulse for a new

art, one which should go beyond the last effective point of evolution in Spanish letters.

Ultarismo recognized as precursors various outstanding figures.

First of all, there was *Gómez de la Serna,* true and indefatigable sire of all Spanish *ultras,* whose genial and productive labors are beyond comparison with those of any other in the same field.

In *Juan Ramón Jiménez,* venerable Andalusian poet, a cerebral mystic, the youth of the day found another precursor. And with certain reservations, the same might be said of *Rubén Dario, Unamuno, Machado* and *Pérez de Ayala.* Among the prose writers, the illustrious name of *Ortega y Gasset* came in for great respect.

The *jovenes* who grouped themselves about this first ultraistic nucleus were, among others, the following: Guillermo de Torre; J. Rivas Panedas; Pedro Garfias; Comet; Cansinos Assens; Jorge Luis Borges; Gerardo Diego; Eugenio Montes; Pando Villar; Humberto Rivas; Adriano del Valle; Juan Chabás; Lasso de la Vega; Ciria y Escalante; Rogelio Buendia; Arconada; Larrea; Gutierrez Gili; Vighi; Bacarisse; Ibarra . . .

The first reviews in which the movement found expression were: *Grecia* (1919–1920); *Cervantes* (1919–1920); *Ultra* (1921–1922); *Tableros* (1922); *Reflector* (1920); *Perseo; Cosmopolis; Horizonte.*

The plastic artists who lined up with the movement were: Vásquez Diaz; Jahl; Aggerholm; Norah Borges; and Rafael Barradas.

Many of the original adherents of this group, as time went on, broke away.

Torre, in 1927, joined me in founding *La Gaceta Literaria.* As for myself, I had a great sympathy for advance-guardism, and for the swift, feverish, machinistic poetry of crowds, the athletic field and the cinema.

A few months after the founding of our periodical, Guillermo de Torre went to South America, where he was married to Norah Borges, sister of the Creole poet, Jorge Luis.

Left alone with the *Gaceta* on my hands, I set about building up and giving reality to many of the advance-guard postulates. I brought the *Cineclub Español,* or advance-guard cinema, into being; I founded La Galeria, an exhibition room for new painting and new books. I strove, in short, to focus all that was young, vital, athletic in our scene.

As it happened, I was a university man, which means a man with some intellectual discipline behind him, one actively and creatively

conscious of the forces of nationalism. And so it was, the *Gaceta Literaria* was able, in addition to the postulates of the advance-guard, to realize certain others purely national and organic. As for example: the Catalan, Portuguese and American Book-Show at Madrid; the planning of the *"Meridiano intelectuel de Hispanoamerica"*; the census of the Jewish families of Spanish origin—the Sefardies—dispersed over the near-East since the fifteenth century; the development of popular art in Spain; lecture-trips over Europe with Spanish themes as the subjects.

These constructive and nationally revivifying tendencies have been correlated with sectors of the young Spanish literature. For example: the group of Andalusian reviews: *Litoral* (Málaga); *Mediodia* (Seville); *Papel de Aleluyas* (Huelva); and *Gallo* (Granada). And the Castillan group: *Carmen* (Santander); *Verso y prosa* (Murcia); *Parabola* (Burgos); *Meseta* (Valladolid); and *Manantial* (Segovia).

These new lyric groups were agreed upon two things: the necessity of putting an orderly limit to the anarchy of the word; and the need of proclaiming the not to be questioned circumstantial significance of certain Spanish classics, such as *Góngora:* triumphal banner of an *orderly revolution.* Andalusian imbued with the Mediterranean, Greco-Latin tradition. And with Góngora, Gracián and Fray Luis de León.

The names which must be mentioned in connection with this constructive phase of advance-guardism are: Garcia Lorca; Alberti; Salinas; Bergamín; Almagro; Marichalar; Guillén; Jiménez Caballero; Buñuel; Moreno Villa; Vela; Jarnés; Espina; Arconada; Altolaguirre; Chabás Prados; Cernuda; Aleixandre; Ledesma Ramos; Hinojosa; Ferrero; Chapela; Basterra; Chacel; Ayala; Aparicio; Andrés Alvarez; Méndez Cuesta; Campourcin, Valbreria; C. Conde; Quiroga; Plá; Neville; Francisco Postor; and others.

In connection with the Catalan literary movement, the Sitges review, *L'Amic de les Arts* must be cited as a coordination of those Andalusian and Castilian organs previously mentioned. This Sitges group may be said to spring lyrically from the advance-guardist, Salvat Papasseit, and today finds its chief representatives in Dali, Gasch, Montanya, Foix, Plaja, Sánchez Juan and others. The same is true of the youthful Helix of Villa Franca de Panadés.

IV

FULL-LENGTH PROFILE

The full-length profile of the new Spanish literature might be sketched in as follows:

From the Life

The characteristics we may diagrammatically subdivide as: antis; pros; themes; media.

And we may then go on to arrange numerically these respective tables, in the order of importance:

Antis of the new literature:

ANTI-romantic 1
" -rhetorical 2
" -political 3
" -plebeian 4
" -pathetic 5

Pros of the new literature:

PRO-cinema 1
" -sport 2
" -circus 3
" -mirth 4
" -play 5
" -purity 6
" -mathematics 7
" -religiosity 8
(in many cases Catholic)

Themes of the new literature:

Improbabilities 1
Realisms 2
More or less inhuman 3
"Poetic problems and puerilities" 4
"Ganglia of hoary themes" 5
"Histology of stodgy literary cases" 6

Media of the new literature:

Idiomatic wealth, sifted, clarified 1
Concept and metaphor—as essential motive levers 2
Gimlet phrases 3
Sonority-nippers 4
Aseptic cotton 5
No chloroform 6
Alcoholic excess 7

WORTH

As to the worth of the new literature, there are two phases to be considered: one, relative; the other, absolute. The relative worth of the new literature in Spain is brief and scant. The new literature is unpopular; it is censured and laughed at by the populace. Yet, the new literature has brought about something that had not happened in our nation since the seventeenth century, by contributing a full-throated note, and one that is its own, to the cosmopolitan concert.

Meanwhile, the young names are getting around in our country, calling forth praise, irony and spittle, and are staging a trans-oceanic raid on the broad stretches of European America, where they find a respectful welcome awaiting them.

Today, all the foreign reviews number at least one young Spaniard among their contributors. And more new things are translated than ever before. All of which is the fruit of those meritorious generations that have gone before.

The war-cry of the Spanish generation of 1898 was the one word, "Europe," and this was the effective rallying-cry of the generation of 1915–1917 (*España y "Sol"*). Until we come to that splendid product called *Ramón Gómez de la Serna.* And those younger than Ramón did even more, if possible, to bring about this novel state of affairs, this Spanish miracle.

As to the absolute worth of the young literature, its value is a very particular one, as the end, the final stage of an evolution. Far from finding its germs in decadence, the new literature is, rather, a culmination that looks unqualifiedly toward the future.

All this is certified by the distinguished Spanish critic, Azorin, in these words:

"Thirty years ago, there were in Madrid only one or two literary nuclei; in the course of the last thirty years, literary production has vastly increased, and there are now a number of such centers in Spain. A literary periodical was started some years ago with a handful of young writers; this periodical, *"La Gaceta Literaria,"* was lustily born; it is one that enjoys a great prestige with the young writers, while those of us who have left our youth behind us read the publication with lively interest. What is to spring from this periodical? What are all these writers after? In what direction are they taking Spanish literature? What is to be the practical result of the tendencies fought for in this *Youth's Gazette?* Only a few years have passed, but things nowadays move rapidly. The original *Gaceta*

Literaria group has been productive, and from one lone nucleus, two or three others have sprung. Its initial effort has succeeded beyond expectation. And all this is not to be looked upon as a negative result; quite the contrary. The seed that has been scattered has borne an abundant and a splendid fruit. Until today, as we run over the literary map of Spain, we find not merely one center, as at the time this publication was started, but two or three and even more. Groups composed of poets, novelists, essayists, philosophers; groups that carry on independently of one another, each one of which has its own aesthetic tendencies and, it might be said, its own politics. One has but to consider the number of reviews that have sprung up within so short a time, since the removal of the dictatorship, reviews founded by former editorial associates of the *Gaceta Literaria,*—for example, *"La Nueva España,"* edited by Antonio Espina, José Diaz Fernández and Joaquin Arderius, three young writers of undoubted talent and of established independence of outlook. The intellectual map of Spain is vast and varied, surpassing, in our opinion, that of other European nations."

Azorin is right: the seed that was scattered has, indeed, borne fruit. It was sown in 1919; it sprouted in 1927; today, it has ripened and shot out branches.

Following the revolutionary, freedom-seeking tendencies of the immediate after-War period came the orderly and constructive ones of 1927. Today, in 1930, the winds are shifting, and we are confronting a new romanticism.

The tendency of prose and poetry is to abandon their "dehumanized" character, to employ the word of our own Ortega y Gasset,—their "pure" character, and poet and prosateur are entering upon a new hunt for the "human." The reign of the *"puros,"* culminating in the publications of the *Revista de Occidente,* is passing. Our literature is beginning to busy itself with politics and with civic, realistic needs. There is a new creative unrest; but out of this third and virgin period, no names, no works have as yet emerged. There has not even been a christening in the form of an initial manifesto.

The sensitivities of our young writers are, none the less, weathercocks, which point to a new wind that is blowing in Spain.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of *The New Review.*)

THE RENAISSANCE OF '98

(After-War Echoes)

Miguel de Unamuno

Miguel de Unamuno, a Basque in origin, was born at Bilbao, in 1864. In 1889, he took a brief trip out of Spain, to Italy and to Paris. In 1891, he was married; eight children were the result of this union. In the same year, he obtained the chair of Greek in the venerable old university of Salamanca, omnium scientiarum princeps. *Salamanca was to become the accustomed background of Don Miguel's intellectual life—did he not one day lecture in the open fields, under an oak-thicket, to the people of Salamanca, as Don Quixote had to the goatherds? In 1901, he was appointed rector. In 1914, he was deprived of his post, following a series of violent polemics. In 1924, the Directorate had him deported to Fuerteventura. He now resides at Hendaye. (J. C.)*

Unamuno is something of a cross between St. Augustine and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Like them, he is absorbed in the contemplation of his own inner miracle. His one great passion is for eternity—"eternization." A solitary, he has many qualities that speak of his Basque origin, among them that avarice of which he tells us in the following excerpt. His most distinguishing characteristic is his rebellious humanity, which he is constantly engaged in sublimating through the process of analysis. Incessantly struggling with himself and with his countrymen, he knows that his real enemy is: Nothingness. It is vain to look for ideas in Unamuno; one finds, rather, words. Ideocracy is one of the dictatorships he is striving to overthrow. A professor himself, he has a hatred for professors. Yet, as he realizes himself, he has the Spanish fondness for antitheses and for Conceptualism. His politics are vague, and lead to the inevitable confusion of politicians; his real polemics are with himself. His thought, like Nietzsche's, is marked by a certain expressive impotence; it is essentially exegetic, and his work is in the nature of commentaries, his subjects ranging from his beloved Don Quixote to Primo de Rivera. As a poet, he is the poet of circumstance and occasion. In short: a true disciple of Don Quixote, a splendid representative of Spanish Quixotism and of Hibernian nihilism. As M. Cassou observes, he stands for what Protestantism might have been, had Protestantism not fallen into the hands of fools and hypocrites, had

it remained the cult of the individual. But in the end, Unamuno's gift is his passion,—his passion and his anguish. He is a swollen, angry mountain torrent trying to flow upward. (See M. Cassou's Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp 58ff., essay previously published as* "Portrait d'Unamuno," *in the* Mercure de France, *15 Mai, 1926.)*

Among Unamuno's more important works are his Life of Don Quixote and of Sancho, *his* The Tragic Sense of Life, *his* Essence of Spain, *his sonnet-series*, From Fuerteventura to Paris, *and his* The Crisis of Christianity *(available in English as "The Agony of Christianity").*

The following essay was written during Unamuno's after-War Paris exile, and is from an unpublished manuscript in the possession of M. Cassou.

HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL

(Extracts)

Here I am before these blank pages—blank as the dark future: a terrible blankness!—seeking to hold back fleeting time, to fix the fugitive today, to eternize or immortalize myself in short, although eternity and immortality are not the same thing. Here I am before these blank pages, my future, seeking to pour my life into them in order to go on living, to give myself life, to snatch myself from the death of every moment. I seek, all in all, to console myself for my exile, for my exile from eternity, for that *un-earthing* [1] which I am fond of referring to as my un-heavening.

Exile! Proscription! What inner, nay, religious experiences I owe it! For it was in that Island of Fuerteventura, which I shall love eternally and from the depths of my bowels,—it was there in God's own refuge, and then, later, in Paris, bloated and brimming with human history, universal history, that I wrote my sonnets. . . . But they are by no means enough; I have not put the whole of my exiled self into them; they impress me as being altogether too slight to eternize me in the fugitive present, that terrifying historical present—history being the possibility of terror.

I see few people; I spend the greater part of my mornings alone, in this cage near the place des États-Unis. After lunch, I go to the Rotonde, where I find a little gathering of Spaniards, young stu-

[1] *Destierro.*

dents for the most part, and we comment upon the rare news that comes to us from Spain, our Spain and the others' Spain; and each day, we begin repeating the same things over again, building, as they say, castles in Spain.

How horrible it is to live upon prospect, imagining each day what may happen the next! I spend whole hours, alone, stretched out upon my solitary bed in my little hotel, looking up at the ceiling of my room, and not the sky, and dreaming of the future of my Spain and of my future. Or else, demolishing them. And I do not dare undertake any work, because I do not know if I shall be able to finish it in peace. Since I do not know whether this exile of mine will last three days, three weeks, three months or three years,—I was about to add: three centuries,—I do not undertake anything which might be lasting. Although nothing endures longer than what one does in the moment and for the moment. May I repeat my favorite expression: *the eternization of the momentary?* My inborn taste—so Spanish!—for antitheses and for conceptualism would lead me to speak of the *momentization of eternity.* Driving in the nail of time!

Under these circumstances and in this state of soul, I was taken with the fancy, some months ago, recollecting Balzac's terrible *Peau de Chagrin,* with the plot of which I was familiar, and which I devoured with an ever-growing anguish, here, at Paris and in exile, —I was taken with the fancy of putting myself into a novel which should be an autobiography. But are they not all autobiographies, those novels that are eternized and endure, and which cause their authors and their antagonists to endure?

During these mid-July days of 1925,—the 14th of July was yesterday,—I have reread the eternal love-letters which that other outlaw, Joseph Mazzini, wrote to Judith Sidoli. . . . In one of these letters, dated October, 1834, Mazzini, in reply to his Judith who had begged him to write a novel, says: "It is impossible for me to write it. You know very well that I cannot separate myself from you and put you into a picture, without revealing my love. . . . At present, the moment I put my love beside you, the novel vanishes." I, too, I have put my Concha, the mother of my children and the living symbol of Spain, of my dreams and of my future, since it is in our children that I must eternize myself,—I, too, expressly, have put her into one of my last sonnets, and tacitly into all. And I have put myself into them. It would be impossible for me to write a novel that would not be autobiographic. And then, strictly speaking, I repeat to myself, all the novels that are born alive, are they not

autobiographic, and is it not by being so that they eternize themselves? And let no one be shocked by my expression, born alive: for (a) one is born and dies alive; (b) one is born and dies dead; (c) one is born living to die dead; (d) one is born dead to die living.

Yes, every novel, every work of fiction, every poem, when it is alive, is autobiographic. Every fictional being, every poetic character that an author creates is a part of the author's self. And if the latter puts into his poem a flesh-and-blood man that he has known, it is after having made him his own, a part of himself. The great historians are autobiographers. . . . All Flaubert's poetic characters are Flaubert and no other. Even to M. Homais, who is Flaubert; and Flaubert scoffs at M. Homais by way of scoffing at himself, out of compassion, that is to say, out of love for himself. Poor Bouvard, poor Pecuchet!

All creatures are their creator. And God was never more the creator than when he died in the Christ, when, in Himself, and in His Son, He tasted death.

I have said that we, authors and poets, put ourselves creatively into all the poetic personages that we create, even when we are dealing with history, when we are poeticizing, and creating individuals who, we believe, exist in flesh and blood, outside ourselves. . . . All of us who live chiefly by reading and in reading, are unable to separate the historic from the poetic or romantic characters. Don Quixote is as effectively real for us as Cervantes, or rather, the latter is as real as the former. All is a book for us, and reading; we speak of the Book of History, the Book of Nature, the Book of the Universe. We are biblical. And we may say that in the beginning there was the Book. Or History. For History begins with the Book and not with the Word, and before History, before the Book, there was no consciousness, therefore no mirror; there was nothing. The prehistoric is unconsciousness; it is the void.

. . . To live in history and to live history! A mode of living history is to create it, to relate it in the form of books. . . . There is a legend of reality which is the substance, which is the intimate reality of reality itself. The essence of an individual and that of a people is their history, and history is what is called the philosophy of history; it is the reflection which each individual or each people gives of what happens to him or them, of what happens in himself, in themselves. But since what I at present propose to do is to narrate how one writes a novel, and not to philosophize or historicize,

I must not permit myself any further distractions, and so, shall take some other occasion to explain the difference that exists between event and deed, between that which happens and passes away and that which is done and remains.

It is told of Lenine that, upon attaining to power in August, 1917, he left uncompleted a badly written tract on *The Revolution and the State;* since he believed it more useful and more opportune to put the Revolution to the test than to write about it. But to write of the Revolution, is that not also to test it out? Did not Karl Marx have as much if not more to do with making the Revolution than did Lenine? Did not Rousseau have as much to do with making the French Revolution as Mirabeau, Danton and Company? Such things as these must be said thousands of times, and they must be said several thousand times more, in order that they may continue to live, the preservation of the universe being, according to the theologians, a continuous creation.

To live in history and to live history, to shape myself in history, in my Spain, and to shape my history, my Spain, and, along with it, my universe and my eternity,—such has been and is ever my one tragic concern in this my exile. History is a legend, that we know; and this legend, this history is devouring me, and when it is through, I shall be through. Which is a tragedy more terrible than that of the tragic Valentin of the *Peau de Chagrin.* And not only my tragedy, but the tragedy of all those who live in history, by history and on history, that of all citizens, which is to say, of all men,—political or civic animals, as Aristotle would have said,—the tragedy of all of us who write and of all of us who read, of all those who shall read these lines. And here it is bursts forth the universality, the omnipersonality and the totopersonality,—*omnis* is not *totus,*—not the impersonality, of this narrative.

My legend! My novel! That means the legend, the novel of me, Miguel de Unamuno as he is known, which we have written together, the others and me, my friends and my enemies, and my friendly-me and my enemy-me. And this is why it is I cannot look at myself for an instant in the mirror, for at once, my eyes go off behind my eyes, behind their likeness, and no sooner do I glance at my glance than I am conscious of being voided, of losing my history, my legend, my novel, of returning into unconsciousness, into the past, into nothingness. As if the future likewise were not nothingness! And yet, the future is our all.

My novel! My legend! The Unamuno of my legend, of my novel,

the one whom we have fashioned together, my friendly-me and my enemy-me, and the others, my friends and my enemies,—this Unamuno gives me life and death, creates me and destroys me, supports me and stifles me. It is my death-agony. Can I be as I believe myself or as others believe me to be? Here is where these lines become a confession in the presence of my unknown and unknowable me, unknown and unknowable for myself. Here is where I create the legend where I must bury myself. But this brings me to my novel.

For I had conceived the idea, some months ago, of creating a novel into which I purposed to put the inmost experiences of my exile, to create myself, to eternize myself under the guise of exile and outlaw. At present, I think that the best way of writing this novel is to tell how it should be written. It is the novel of the novel, the creation of creation. Or God of God, *Deus de Deo.*

. . . . .

It is thus that the novel of my Jugo de la Raza, my novel of Jugo de la Raza, evolved. And yet I, Miguel de Unamuno, a Romantic also, could barely write, barely act from fear of being devoured by my actions. From time to time, I wrote political letters against Don Alfonso XIII. and against the tyrannical praetorians of my poor fatherland; but these letters, which made history in my Spain, devoured me. And down there, in my Spain, my friends and my enemies were saying that I am not a politician, that I haven't the temperament for it, much less the temper of a revolutionary, and that I ought to devote my time to writing poems and novels and let politics go. As if politics were any different from writing poems, and as if writing poetry were not another form of politics!

. . . . .

In Spain, I would not and will not write for any newspaper, any magazine; I refuse to subject myself to the humiliation of the military censorship. I cannot suffer my writings to be censored by illiterate mercenaries, degraded and debased by the discipline of camps, and whose only hatred, it is plain to be seen, is for intelligence. I am aware that, after having permitted me to utter a few really harsh and even, from their point of view, felonious opinions, they will strike out an innocent word, if only to make me feel their power. A statutory censorship. No.

. . . . .

I must confess that the greatest confidence I have been able to feel in my good sense has been in those moments when, observing what others do and what they do not do, listening to what they say and what they do not say, this fugitive suspicion has skimmed my mind: "Can it be that I am crazy?"

By being crazy is understood losing one's reason. Reason, but not the truth, for there are madmen who speak truths while others keep silent, because it is neither rational nor reasonable to utter them, and that is why they call them madmen. And what is reason? Reason is something concerning which we are all in agreement, all, or at least the vast majority. Truth is something else. Reason is social; the truth, ordinarily, is completely individual, personal and incommunicable. Reason binds us and truths separate us.

Sometimes, in those moments in which I feel myself a creature of fiction, and when I am writing my novel, where I depict myself in the presence of myself, I have been led to dream either that all the others, especially in my Spain, are mad, or that I myself am, and that, since all the others cannot be, it is I who am. And in listening to the opinions to which they give vent, regarding my sayings, my writings and my actions, I think: "Can it be that I utter other words than those which I hear myself uttering, or that they hear me uttering others than those which I speak?" And I never fail then to remember Don Quixote.

Here I may repeat something which I believe I have already said on the subject of Our Lord Don Quixote, which was by way of inquiring what would have been his punishment, if, in place of dying as soon as he had recovered his reason, that reason which everybody else possessed, losing thereby his truth, the truth that was his own,—what would have happened if, in place of dying as had to be, he had lived a few years more. What would have happened is that all the madmen then in Spain,—and there must have been a plenty, for they had just brought back the terrible malady from Peru,—would have come running to him to solicit his aid, and when he refused them, they would have crushed him with insults and would have treated him as a comedian, a traitor and a renegade. For there is a host of madmen who suffer from a persecution-mania, which turns into a persecuting-mania, and these madmen start pursuing Don Quixote the moment the latter declines to pursue their supposed persecutors. But, Don Quixote, what could I have done to be thus the magnet for madmen who believe themselves perse-

cuted? Why do they come running to me? Why do they heap praises upon me, if they must afterwards overwhelm me with injuries?

. . . . .

And I devoured, as I still devour—the newspapers, and waited for letters from Spain. And I wrote those verses of the LXXVIIIth. sonnet of my *From Fuerteventura to Paris:*

> The Revolution is a comedy
> Which the Lord has invented against ennui.

But is it not made up of ennui, this historic anguish? At the same time, I was disgusted with my contemporaries.

I understand perfectly the sentiments which Mazzini expressed in a letter from Berne, addressed to his Judith, the 2nd of March, 1835: "If I followed my personal inclinations, I would give the lie to and crush with my scorn those who speak my language, but I would annihilate with my revengeful indignation the foreigner who, in my presence, should so much as guess at my feelings." I comprehend perfectly his "ill-tempered spite" against his fellow men, and above all, against his countrymen, against those who understood and judged him so wrongly. How impressive it was the verity of this "disdainful soul," twin sister to the soul of Dante, the other great outlaw, the other great and disdainful one!

There is no means of guessing, of prophesying rather, how it is all going to end; for down there in my Spain, no one believes in what he says is his belief: the socialists do not believe in socialism, nor in the class-struggle, nor in the law of wages, nor other Marxian embolisms; the communists do not believe in the community; nor the conservatives in conservation; nor the anarchists in anarchy; the praetorians do not believe in the dictatorship. . . . Beggarly people! And does anyone believe in himself? Do I believe in myself? "The people are silent!" Thus ends Pushkin's tragedy, *Boris Godounoff.* It is that the people do not believe in themselves. And God is silent! That is what is at the bottom of the universal tragedy: God is silent, and he is silent because he is an atheist!

. . . . .

But I interrupt this novel to come back to the other. . . . People up here ask me if I can go back to Spain, if there is some law or ruling on the part of the authorities which forbids my return; and it is difficult to explain, especially to these foreigners, why it is I

cannot and must not go back so long as the Directorate exists, so long as General Martinez Anido is in power, for I could not keep silent nor refrain from making accusations; and if I go back to Spain and make accusations, and if I go crying the truth in the streets and in the public squares, my truth, why, then, my liberty and my life would be in danger, and if I lose these, they would do nothing more for me, those who call themselves my friends and the friends of freedom and of life. Some of them, when I explain my position to them, smile and say: "Ah! yes, it is a question of dignity!" And I can make out, under their smile, that they are saying: "He's acting his part. . . ."

And have they not some reason for saying so? Am I not engaged in losing my inner self, my divine self, that which I am in God, that which I ought to be, for the sake of the other, the historic self, for the one who moves in its history and with its history? Why am I so obstinate about going back to Spain? Am I not engaged in creating my legend, the one that inters me, beyond that which others, friends and enemies, are creating for me? It is simply that, if I do not create my legend, I shall wholly die. And if I create it, I shall also die.

It may be that I am here creating my legend, writing my novel and theirs, that of the King, that of Primo de Rivera, that of Martinez Anido, creatures of my kind, creatures of fiction. Am I wrong in attributing to them certain intentions and certain feelings? Are they as I paint them? Are they only that? . . . I shall not say that I admire our king, but that I love him, yes, because he is mine, because I have created him. I should like to see him out of Spain, but I love him. And it may be that I love that ninny of a Primo de Rivera, who is sorry for what he has done to me, as he is sorry for what he has done to Spain. And as for that poor epileptic, Martinez Anido, who, in the midst of an attack, foaming at the mouth and trembling all over, demanded my head, I feel for him a pity that is almost affection, for I presume there is nothing he desires so much as my pardon, especially if he suspects that I pray for him every day: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." Ah! but there is a part to play! Back on the stage! Let the show go on!

. . . . .

Hypocrite! For I who am, by profession, a poor beggar of a Greek professor,—it was a chair of Greek which the Directorate comically

took away from me, reserving it for me—I know that hypocrite signifies actor. Hypocrite? No! My rôle is my truth, and I must live my truth, which is my life.

At present, I am playing the part of outlaw. To the point of neglecting my person, to the point of stubbornly refusing to change my clothes or to procure myself any new ones, which is all a part of the rôle I am playing!—abetted by a certain tendency to avarice from which I have never been free, and which, when I am alone and far from my family, finds nothing to counteract it. When my wife came to see me, with my three daughters, in February, 1924, she looked after my linen, repaired my clothes for me, purchased me a fresh supply of socks. My socks are now all full of holes, having been mended until there is nothing left to mend, possibly in order that I may be able to say to myself what Don Quixote, my Don Quixote, said, that "O poverty, poverty!" which I have so passionately commentated in my *Life of Don Quixote and of Sancho.*

Can it be that I am playing a comedy, even for these who are my own? No, no, it is that my life and my truth are my rôle. When I was exiled without being told—and I do not know it yet—the cause or even the motive of my exile, I expressed a desire that none of my family should accompany me, that I be permitted to leave alone. I had need of solitude; and what was more, I knew that the penalty which those tyrannous barrack-masters really wanted to inflict upon me was the obligation to spend money, so that they might be able to chastise me in my modest possessions and those of my children; I knew that this exile was a mode of confiscation, and I made up my mind to keep my expenses down as much as possible and even to avoid paying them, as I did. For it was in their power to put me on a desert island, but not at my own expense.

I asked to be left alone, and, understanding me and truly loving me,—for they were my own, and I was theirs,—they left me to myself. It was then, at the close of my confinement upon the island, after my son had come with his wife to join me,—it was then that an Argentine lady put in her appearance,—accompanied, for safety perhaps, by her daughter,—and nearly drove me mad with her epistolary persecutions. She gave me to understand that she had come to do what my own people, what my wife and children had not done. This lady is literary, and my wife, although she writes well, is not. Can it be that this lady, concerned with her reputation and desirous, it may be, of connecting it with my own, loves me more than my Concha, the mother of my eight children, my own

true mother? My true mother, yes. In a moment of supreme, abysmal anguish, when she beheld me in the clutches of the Angel of the Void, weeping superhuman tears, she cried out from the depths of her maternal, superhuman, divine being: "My child!" Then it was that I discovered all that God had given me in this woman, the mother of my children, my virgin-mother, who knows no other novel than my novel, she, my mirror of holy and divine unconsciousness, mirror of eternity. That is why she left me alone upon my island, while the other, the woman of letters, whose novel was hers and not mine, and who loved me only for herself and not for myself, was coming to me to seek emotions that were worthy of the cinema.

But the poor woman of letters was seeking what I am seeking, what every writer, every historian, every novelist, every politician, every poet is seeking: a durable and permanent place in history; she was seeking not to die. These last few days, I have been reading Proust, prototype of writers and of solitaries,—and what a tragedy, his solitude! That which causes him so much anguish, that which permits him to sound the depths of human tragedy, is his feeling for death, but the death of every instant; he feels himself dying moment by moment, dissects the cadaver of his soul, and with what minuteness! *A la recherche du temps perdu!* One is always losing time. What is called gaining time is to lose it. Time, there lies the tragedy.

"I know those artists' woes as set forth by artists; they are the shadow of grief, and not its body," wrote Mazzini to his Judith, the 2nd of March, 1835. And Mazzini was an artist, neither more nor less than an artist. A poet and, as a politician, a poet, nothing but a poet. Shadow of grief, and not the body. But that is at the bottom of the Romantic tragedy, of the tragic romance of history: grief is shadow and not body; the most grievous grief, that which wrings cries and tears from God, is the shadow of boredom; time is not corporal. Kant would say that it is an a priori form of the sensibility. That life is a dream. . . .

. . . . .

What am I going to do with my Jugo de la Raza? Inasmuch as what I am writing here, reader, is a true novel, a true poem, a creation, and since it consists in telling you how a novel is written and not how it is told, a historic life,—this being so, I have nothing whatsoever with which to satisfy your frivolous story-supplement interest. Every reader who, reading a novel, is concerned with knowing how the characters will turn out, without being concerned to

know how he himself is going to end, does not deserve to have his curiosity satisfied.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of M. Jean Cassou.)

Azorin

Azorin, made a member of the Spainsh Academy some years ago, is Martinez Ruiz in private life. He was born in 1874. Like a younger Spanish writer of today, Gabriel Miró, Azorin is of Alicante, and may be said to represent the transition between tragic Castile and the plastic Mediterranean. To his origin, he probably owes, in no small degree, his taste for the sensuous and the concrete.

On the side of style, Azorin marks a break in the Spanish tradition, the tradition of the orotund period; his short, telling sentences have led to his being accused of Gallicism, and he may be said, in a way, to stand for a combination of Mediterranean suppleness and French clarity.

On the side of content, Azorin, by his tendency to de-romanticize the Andalusian-gypsy Spain of tradition, lines up with the Generation of '98. His forte is the insignificant and the mediocre.

As a critic and essayist, Azorin has interested himself in the discovery of Spain's past; he was largely responsible for the resurrection of Baltásar Gracian, and of baroque art, and has done much toward the reëstablishment of a national spiritual tradition; but his chief concern as an essayist is, after all, with the odd and the out-of-the-way trifle, a trait that accords with his dry humor.

Azorin has been compared with Anatole France, but he is a good deal more the artist than France, less superficial, much more sensitive. Like Unamuno, he is not to be omitted from any after-the-War survey; M. Cassou, in his Introduction, has spoken of Azorin's post-bellum overhauling of his subject-matter, and of the later influences he has undergone: Joyce, Proust, Freud, Rilke, etc. And Azorin's very latest work displays a decidedly Surréaliste *tendency. (See M. Cassou's* Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 72ff.)*

This Super-realist trend is especially evident in what Señor Azorin terms his Nuevas obras, *or "New Works"—see his* Felix Vargas, *1928, his* Blanco en azul, *1929, etc.*

Azorin's earlier and more purely creative work includes: La Voluntad, *1902;* Antonio Azorin, *1903;* Los pueblos, *1905;* Las

Confesiones de un pequeño filosofo, *1906;* Castilla, *1912. To this list should be added his after-War* Don Juan, *1924. His critical period extends from about 1912 to about 1915:* Lecturas españolas, *1912;* Clásicos y modernos, *1913;* Los Valores literarios, *1913;* El licenciado Vidriera, *1913. To which is to be added his* Racine y Molière, *1925. His commentary on Don Quixote* (La Ruta de Don Quixote) *is also to be mentioned.*

The following selection represents Azorin at his most typical, rather than in his most recent Surréaliste *aspect.*

THE MOTH AND THE FLAME

"Do you remember, Blanca, that tiny piazza we saw in Leon, six years ago?"

"Six years ago? Is it already six years ago?"

And Blanca Duran, indolently lolling in her wide arm-chair, cast a slightly saddened glance around the room.

"Yes; it is already six years ago," replied Joachim Delgado, the poet.

"How time doth fly!" exclaimed Blanca. And she sent up a puff of smoke. Then, holding her cigarette between her fingers, she remained absorbed, pensive.

Dinner was over. After that dinner—which had not been partaken of in the large dining-room of the palace, but in a smaller, more intimate one—after that dinner, the four or six guests—poets, novelists, free lances—were prattling with absolute freedom in the comfortable, quiet room. Time passed swiftly. While the cigarette smoke went up in capricious spirals, Blanca kept thinking of the distant, ancient town. A pleasant sensation—melancholy and voluptuous—was deadening her nerves.

"How time doth fly!" again exclaimed the lady.

The guests were likewise sprawling upon wide divans; they smoked, and sat up occasionally to extend an arm and seize a glass of liqueur set upon some diminutive table set up within their reach. The conversation was slow, soft, peaceful. In this agreeable prattle there were no prejudices, no fears, no scruples. They talked about everything with freedom and simplicity.

"How time doth fly!" said Blanca for the third time. Her red, sensuous lips parted to throw out a puff of smoke. With the pink nail of her small finger she detached the ashes of her cigarette.

"I would like to see again that tiny piazza in Leon!" she said after a moment's meditation.

"Do you remember, Blanca, the peace, the silence, the profound calm in that tiny piazza?" asked the poet.

"I do, I do!" exclaimed Blanca. "A wonderful peace!"

"A silence so dense, so deep, it made you think of death!" replied her interlocutor.

"Who speaks of death?" asked another guest, after swallowing, as he reclined, a glassful of liquor.

"A wonderful silence!" added Blanca. "I would see that little square again!"

"Those little squares in ancient Spanish towns," said the poet, "have an inexplicable, mysterious enchantment."

"As mysterious as death?" asked from afar the guest who had just drunk a glass of liquor.

"Don't speak of death!" shouted another. "Long live life!"

"I would like to see that tiny square again," repeated Blanca.

Her glance travelled over the drawing-room, dreamy, melancholy; from her lips escaped another puff of smoke. And now, as she reclined in her arm-chair, she remained for a long time absorbed, abstracted, thinking indefinite thoughts.

It was autumn. The trees were dyed a pale yellow; then a more intense yellow; then the dye was old gold. Blanca had left Madrid in her motor car, bound for Leon. She wished to see, in these melancholy days of the declining year, the tiny square that might bewitch her once more. The powerful motor travelled fast. Blanca gazed on the distant, blue outline of the mountains, and thought of nothing. As it came out of Guadarramas, the car was stopped by an accident. Nothing serious had happened; the passengers had suffered no injuries whatsoever; but it proved necessary to return to Madrid to have the car repaired. Could the distinguished travellers resume their trip on the following morning? The journey had started ominously. Two days after she had returned to Madrid, Blanca received a telegram from Paris. The lady must leave at once; some urgent business matters required her presence in the French capital. The trip to Leon was postponed indefinitely; but Blanca kept thinking about the ancient town, and with the mind's eyes she saw the tiny square where she would stand once more for a moment. A moment in which she would again enjoy the silence, the peace, the profound stillness.

Why not undertake the trip to Leon at once, during these few days? Why not resume the journey now? The motor had been repaired, that Paris business could perhaps be settled without her being present there. From Madrid to Paris and from Paris to Madrid, telegrams came and went. Blanca was trying to excuse herself from going to the great city; each urgent, comminatory telegram she answered by another, as categorical and peremptory. She did not wish to go to Paris at present; let everything be arranged without her; let them do everything they might see fit; she would go later. . . . But all was in vain. The tiny square in Leon—so silent, so still—was not to be beheld at this time by the lady. Blanca's presence in Paris was sternly required. And our handsome traveller left for Paris, saddened and annoyed.

But from Paris it is possible to go anywhere. From Paris, undoubtedly, one may go to Rome, to Berlin, to Vienna, to Constantinople. From Paris one can also go to Leon. In her hotel room in Paris, Blanca kept thinking of the tiny square in Leon. The sky was a silvery grey in those wintry days; the temperature was mild; the cold was not overwhelming; a bitter-sweet sensation of coldness, not much coldness at that, incited one to taking long, wholesome walks. Along the banks of the Seine, Blanca the dreamer, the romanticist, walked rapidly under an ash-colored sky. From time to time she paused for a moment before a stall laden with old books; her shapely hands picked up a tome, turned over its leaves negligently. They put it back carefully. And, aimlessly, dreamily, Blanca's thoughts went far, very far away; they went to a tiny square in an ancient town.

Within two days, her Paris business over, Blanca will leave for Leon. The thing is settled. Two days in Leon, then to Madrid. But when she returned to her hotel that afternoon, a pleasant surprise awaited her there. Some old friends had come from London to see her. Blanca's joy was sincere, most cordial. Those dear old friends had journeyed to Paris to see Blanca, afterwards to leave for a cruise on the Mediterranean. What a beautiful trip the friends of the distinguished lady from Madrid are going to undertake! Blanca must accompany them; they never would console themselves if their friend, their dear friend, did not go with them. They insisted so, with such kindness, that finally Blanca decided to accompany them on their trip.

How blue the Mediterranean! In the blue of the sea, under the

blue of the sky, yonder, an island outlined itself, far, far away. In all this immensity—flat and peaceful—there were but two colors, two shades of blue, that of the sky, and that of the sea. Two colors which were but one; one single color of blue with various combinations and shades. Sometimes the blue of the sky was the more intense; sometimes it was that of the sea. And, in spots, up yonder and down below, a few white, foamy masses moving and travelling slowly or rapidly. Up yonder, the clouds; down below, the crests of the waves. And now, in the distance, in the far distance, after they had overcome the intoxication of the blue, the eyes began to make out a thin and subtle brush-stroke of mauve, purple and gold.

On deck, Blanca, seated in a wide folding-chair, gazed upon the island which rose in the distance. And her thoughts, from the sky, from the sea, from the distant island, flew in one moment to a silent, tiny square in an ancient town.

After her long cruise around the Mediterranean, through the Far East, Blanca invited her friends to spend a few days in her house in San Sebastian. When her friends went back to London, in a couple of weeks, she would undertake the trip to Leon. On her way to Madrid, she would make a détour; she would stop for a few hours in the historical town, and then resume her trip to the capital of Spain.

The day after her London friends left, Blanca felt somewhat indisposed. However, it was nothing. It was nothing; but her physician counselled her not to return to Madrid. It was advisable, given the temperament of the patient, that she should spend one month or two in Switzerland. In fact, Blanca had been needing the climate of the heights for a very long time. The physician was most insistent. It was not possible for the time being to undertake the trip to the Castillian town.

And the traveller soon found herself in a hotel on the Swiss mountains. From her room, her windows wide open, Blanca gazed at the top, all hoary with snow, and very close at hand, of a mountain. Close, very close at hand? The transparency of the air was such that, although the mountain was very far away, it seemed that one might touch it with one's hand. And in the air, so subtle, so transparent, the whiteness of the mountain was set off in relief. Below, upon the sides, all was dark, the ravines were gloomy depths, black and stern; here and there, among the gloom, shone and glittered the edge of a rock, laden with snow.

Blanca's gaze was pacified by the whiteness of the snow, it penetrated the depths of the ravines, it ran over the translucent sky. And the lady's thoughts dreamily wandered off meanwhile to a tiny square in an ancient town.

At last, in the distance, the ancient town was coming into view. At last the trip had become a reality. Fate had been continually delaying this visit to Leon. Days, months had passed. It seemed that some occult, mysterious force had been raising obstacles so that the trip should not take place. And it seemed, likewise, that another force, just as mysterious and powerful, went on fighting, doggedly, perseveringly, to destroy those obstacles. A dreadful, tragic struggle between two inimical forces, had taken place around that trip. Like a twig, like a dry leaf rolling upon the ground, Blanca's life, in the unfathomable region of mystery, came and went, brought here and carried there, agitated by a fateful breeze. While her destiny was being decided—yonder, in the Infinite—Blanca had been gazing upon the Guadarramas, the sky of Paris, the Mediterranean, the Swiss mountains. . . .

At last—after overcoming so many obstacles—Blanca stood in the ancient town. The tiny square was no longer the same; they had torn down some of the houses; on one side, in one of the new buildings, a barroom had been opened. . . . The lady stood in the tiny square. Suddenly, furious shouts were heard in the barroom. Two men issued from it, running; a shot rang out; the lady staggered for a moment; clutched at her breast with her hands; fell down in a heap.

In the region of unfathomable mystery, the battle was over. Of the two contending, inimical powers, one had triumphed: that of Death. Ever since our planet was a nebula, it was perhaps ordained that a dreamy, fine, delicate, romantic lady was to overcome a thousand difficulties, a thousand obstacles which opposed themselves to her death, to go—like a moth to the flame—seek her end in a tiny square full of silence, peace and calm, in an ancient town.

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Pio Baroja

Pio Baroja is another writer of Basque origin, born in 1872, and many of his novels have for background the Basque country or Navarre (for example, his La casa de Aizgorri, *1900). Baroja started life as a physician. Later, he was an accountant in a Madrid bakery. He now, save for not infrequent trips over Europe, leads a retired life. (J. C.)*

Baroja, owing undoubtedly to his superb drawing of unusual types, to his disdainful mingling of social classes, and to the rapid tempo of his works, is one of the most popular novelists in Spain. Indeed, when a vote was taken on the subject by a Madrid newspaper not long ago, it was Baroja who won the day. He is, it might be said, beloved for his ferociously bad temper. He has a hatred of the provincial life he is so fond of portraying, and his books are aggressive, picaresque, Quixotic, full of a disconcerting mixture of paradox and platitude, and marked by a certain subversive extravagance.

Like the Basques as a race, Baroja is opinionated and passionately fond of freedom. He has a worship for energy, the will and action, and would seem to be bent upon the Nietzcheanization of Spain; there is in him, too, no little of the nihilism of the Russian novelists. But "action" with Baroja is largely action in the void, a sort of ambulatory mania, which is again in the Quixotic tradition. The distinguished critic, Ortega y Gasset, has written an essay on Baroja, in which he takes the novelist rather severely to task, upon this and other points. Baroja, however, animated by a cosmopolitan spirit that is not unlike Stendhal's, is determined "n'être pas dupe," *as the French say. The result is a certain photography, a certain brutal* reportage.

Our author, in brief, is frank, misanthropic, pessimistic, passionate, capricious—in other words, he is a Basque.

Like Stendhal, Baroja is accused of "writing badly." He does not deny it. See an article of his on "The Writer," published, in M. Georges Pillement's translation, in the Nouvel Age *for February, 1931. But he resembles Stendhal in other ways. There is the same clear, incisive draughtsmanship, the same arrogant precision and simplicity of draughtsmanship.*

The whole of Baroja's bibliography would occupy entirely too much space. His first book was his Vidas sombrias, *1900. The following year, he published, in addition to* La casa de Aizgorri, *his* Inventos, aventuras y mixtificaciones de Silvestre Paradox. *His*

Paradox rey *("King Paradox") was published in 1906. His* Juventud, egolatria *("Youth and Egolatry"), published in 1917, is autobiographic. Among his anarchistic novels:* La Ciudad de la Niebla, *1909. He also has a series of novels under the general title of* Memorias de un hombre de accion, *the hero of which, Aviraneta, is an unusual sort of conspirator. See M. Cassou's* Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp 77ff.*

AMOROUS EXPERIMENTS OF A SIMPLE-MINDED MAN IN A DEGENERATE AGE

(*From* "Ensayos amorosos de un Hombre Ingenuo en una época de Decadencia")

PROLOGUE

Note for the Edition of 1954.

In bringing out a new edition of *Amorous Experiments of a Simple-Minded Man,* the work of an unknown writer and of another generation, our purpose is neither to bring to light a deservedly illustrious author nor to rescue from oblivion a literary gem.

Nothing could be less literary than this work. There is no doubt that Luis Murguia was not a man of letters, nor even a literary dilettante; he was merely a curious soul, an amateur psychologist and the critic of an aging, archaic and rut-ridden society. His book, which is a bit paradoxical, pretends to be of a documentary nature, and to afford an accurate picture of Spanish society at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, a society still ruled by capitalism, militarism and theocracy, and which disappeared entirely with the revolution of 1948. For us Spaniards of the second half of the twentieth century, who find ourselves living in the midst of an industrial régime, the environment depicted by Murguia would seem to belong to an already distant past. It is to be regretted that the book was not carried to a suitable conclusion, and that it is so god-awfully written, the style upon occasion being purely telegraphic.

In giving us the story of his life, Luis Murguia shows himself to be a good deal of a scatter-brain, and what he has to say very often makes no sense whatsoever; but at certain moments—they do not occur any too frequently—we find him a charming enough companion. Our author, wholly lacking in intellectual background, has obviously made an effort to create some sort of culture for himself and to bring some sort of order into his thinking. But it is easy to see that Murguia was not animated by the ambition to produce a work of art, and that he has simply let himself go, for the sake of the melancholy pleasure he finds in calling up his memories.

Of the man himself, we know only what he has seen fit to tell us: that he was curious about many things, sentimental, a cynic—in the way to being a connoisseur of souls.

To undertake to distinguish truth from fiction in this work would be, naturally, an impossible task. The book closes upon the author's old age. What happened to him afterwards? We have not the faintest idea. The very fact that we are in absolute ignorance as to his end makes us all the more eager to know how he ended, and what this chap of so critical, negative, melancholy and carping a turn of mind found to do in his old age. But beyond his book, we have been able to learn nothing whatsoever about him.

Let us be satisfied, therefore, with what he himself has to teïl us, and let him do the talking from now on.

THE PUBLISHER

PART TWO
STUDENT

I
VILLAZAR

As I took the stage-coach at Arnazabel, my heart was in my mouth. I had to wait for the train, changing twice, and then at last I reached Villazar, where a dark close-shaved man with a bluish chin, who looked a little like a curate, was waiting for me.

"Come on, you, quick, hand me your bag," he said to me roughly.

He put my bag upon a wheelbarrow, and we set off for the town.

My aunt Luisa lived in a big house in a deserted street, gloomy and full of dust, the ground-floors of the houses along this street being occupied by nasty little seed-merchants' shops. My aunt's

house was spacious, but the rooms inside were quite odd-shaped, and there were stairs to go from one room to another. In the back, she had a large court-yard, where you always saw three or four carts to haul the wheat which they brought from the villages to a ground-floor granary.

When I came in the house, I found my Aunt Luisa in her private room, engaged in the strangest occupation that could be imagined. She was cleaning human bones. My aunt had just had the remains of a few Arellanos, buried in the village church, transferred to her La Mota del Ebro pantheon. My aunt had had her ancestors' bones turned over to her, and every morning, in place of going through gymnastic exercises or shining shoes, she would sort out a few tibias, ulnas and radiuses and would polish them with a brush and a rag to make them shine. Then she would put them back in a suitcase. My aunt, it is plain to be seen, felt that bones as illustrious as those of the Arellanos ought to be kept neat and clean.

My Aunt Luisa gave me a cool reception, and looked me over through her lorgnette, while all the time she was holding in her hands the shoulder-blade of some famous Arellano, and she gave me a right sharp sermon about impiety and lack of respect and goodness knows how many other crying disgraces to be found in modern society. I must have religion, be respectful to persons older than myself, I must be humble, circumspect, submissive and so on, tut, tut, and pooh, pooh.

My aunt was a pale, well-built lady with one of those nervy faces that you see on big women who are a little pug-nosed, and especially on big women who are a little pug-nosed and who wear a lorgnette. She spoke with a tone of authority, as if her bugler was right beside her. And she was still more imperious when she raised her binoculars.

After she had preached me a sermon, she rang for the maid to have me shown to my room. They put me in a little room on the court; I washed and cleaned up and sat down upon my bag to think over my aunt's suggestions. Suddenly, I heard a voice in the court and opened the window. A ruddy little teamster was singing in a very squeaky voice:

> If you'd like to have me, . . .
> little bit of heaven . . .

A fine way to be following my aunt's advice! She called me downstairs not long afterwards and asked me any number of questions,

which I don't know how I answered. My aunt fascinated me, numbed me and paralyzed me all at once; she exerted over me the traditional fascination of the serpent for the little birdie. My aunt thought that she was the personification of wisdom, and she imagined, I don't know why, that she was the center of interest for everybody.

At dinner-time, my Uncle Javier, my aunt's husband, came in, humming an air from *La Diva* that was very much in vogue then:

I am a friend of Raphael,
I am a friend of Balthasar . . .

He looked at me in some astonishment, as if a young lad was one of the most curious objects in the world.

My Uncle Javier, in spite of an incipient hemiplegia which had left him with a twisted mouth and a useless leg, was quite a merry man; he sang, whistled and ate like a crocodile. I was stupefied as I saw all that he put down.

A few days after my arrival at Villazar, I entered the Institute and, at the same time, a seminary, where I stayed till the end of the term.

In the beginning, life at my uncle's was not very pleasant for me; from the spoiled child and everybody's pet that I had been at my grandmother's, I became the fifth wheel of a carriage. I was the last to be served at table; when it came to wine, I had the dregs of the bottle, and they grudged me my dessert.

I believe that my aunt at bottom was a cruel person, with that sort of cruelty that doctors call sadism. She liked to say to folks whatever she thought would torture them most. She always had the maids in tears. She gave her husband digs that would have made anybody else sweat blood, but he just listened as if he heard it raining. As for myself, after a certain length of time, I can't say whether she had come to hate or despise me; her feelings for me were rather mixed, between sympathy and contempt.

Towards her inferiors, she was harsh; she discovered everything that the maids had done or failed to do: chick-peas too hard, the soup burned, or the corner of the room unswept assumed the proportions of an event to be shouted over the housetops, while the guilty one was put in the domestic pillory.

My aunt loved luxury. She wore very sumptuous old clothes and many rings on her fingers. She fancied herself the arbiter of Villazar. This Madame Petronius knew everything before it happened. She possessed the indisputable right of saying unpleasant things to

everybody; but if she didn't like some one else's language, she would scream at the top of her voice.

My Uncle Javier, in spite of his twisted mouth and the peg-leg he dragged after him, was always running after the girls, and I learned afterwards that they had set traps for him. With a few old codgers of his own kind, crack-brained erotics or sexually hypertrophied old birds, he was always out for the young ones.

My Aunt Luisa had a lot of relations at Villazar. The Arellanos were very distinguished. According to her, they were the descendants of the Kings of Navarre; but I have known so many families descended from the Kings of Navarre that it seems to me it would be a point in any family's favor not to be their descendants.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Ramón Del Valle-Inclán

Ramón Maria del Valle-Inclán was born, in 1869, in Galicia, the Brittany of Spain, and he has been said to possess the soul of a Chouan, *or Breton royalist. He is one of the best loved figures in Spain. He has created, or there has been created, about his life and work a sumptuous, knightly sort of legend. His sayings, his doings are famous.*

Valle-Inclán's "Sonatas" are well known. Centering about the Marquis of Bradomin, who has been an inspiration for Casanova, Barbey d'Aurevilly and D'Annunzio, they are an embodiment of the author's romantic and mythologic soul. (Sonata de Otoño, *1902;* Sonata de Estio, *1903;* Sonata de Primavera, *1904;* Sonata de Invierno, *1905.*)

Valle-Inclán has also written huge works for the theatre—novels in play form, and quite unperformable. In these will be found a pervading sense of terror, tragedy and mysticism, while the idiom is archaic and composite, rare and abstruse words being curiously intermingled with vulgarisms. One of the author's most prominent gifts is his faculty of lending connotation to the word and gesture. His personae, likewise, are remarkable: great lords, priests, courtiers, puppets. His work may come as a shock to the sensibilities, or it may provoke the risibilities: his interpolation of coarse dialogue and delicate description, his admixture of paganism and romanticism, of fantasy and brutality, of sensuality and vernal freshness, of religion

and blasphemy (this last a very Spanish quality). It is, as one critic has observed, something like the Bacchanale and the Pilgrims' March in Tannhäuser. *Any number of "influences" have been seen in Valle-Inclán: Hugo, Ibsen, Maeterlinck—their diversity is encouraging. What we have, when all is said, is an original and a vigorous talent: Velasquez and Philip IV's dwarf. (See the Introduction by M. Jean Nible to the French translation of the* Divinas Palabras.) *Among other of the author's plays may be mentioned the* Romance de Lobos.

As a poet, Vallen-Inclán hovers between Conceptualism and the baroque. He is the contemporary of Quevedo. His taste for the grotesque and for the overladen décor *comes out here. He displays at times a Hugoesque ingenuity, and the result is a species of verbal delirium. But his work has magic and a dream-atmosphere. See the verse-volume,* La pipa de Kif, *which exhibits the poet's virtuosity at its best. See, also,* La marquesa Rosalinda.

Valle-Inclán is another of the older writers who is in excellent standing with the young. He has recently invented a form which he calls esperpentos, *which represents a highly stylized development of the burlesque and infantile side of his talent. These are what might be described as "Russian marionettes." (See M. Jean Cassou's* Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 85ff.)*

We may, perhaps, be finally satisfied with looking upon Don Valle-Inclán as a combination of picaresco *and mystic.*

DIVINE WORDS

(*From* "DIVINAS PALABRAS")

FIRST DAY

Scene First

San-Clemente, of the parish of Viana del Prior. At the crossroads, a country church, surrounded by a cemetery. Tombs and cypress. PEDRO GAILO, *the sacristan, is extinguishing the candles under the Roman portico. He is a funereal old man: face and hands yellow; badly shaved about the mouth; cassock and surplice. He joggles his fingers and, after having blown upon them, rubs the blackened base of the portico columns. He goes on talking to himself; with a savage air, he mutters fragmentary imprecations.*

PEDRO GAILO.—The nerve of them, coming to camp here, right facing the altar! Bums! Trash! The worst breed! Everywhere they go, they're up to their dirty work. Think of them coming to camp here! Gang o' thieves! Bums and hoboes!

(PEDRO GAILO *runs his hand over his forehead, and his four hairs stand up on end. He squints toward the road where a pair of mountebanks are taking their ease. In addition to the couple, man and woman, there is a small child, their illegitimate offspring. The woman is slender and sorry-looking, with a short skirt and blue neckerchief. Combs and brooches. The man, wearing a cap, has a guitar in a sling and a dirty-looking trained dog fastened to a red rope. They are seated in the ditch, opposite the church portico. The man is talking, and the woman listens as she rocks the crying infant. This woman is known under a variety of names. According to the district she happens to be in, she is* JULIA, ROSINA, MATILDE, PEPA LA MORENA. *The name of her male companion is another mystery. But the woman calls him* LUCERO. *Her lover calls her* POCA PENA.)

LUCERO.—Speaking about the little one, some night when we're going through a town, we'll have to leave him behind.

POCA PENA.—Bad father!

LUCERO.—But supposing I'm not.

POCA PENA.—You act as if you weren't his father.

LUCERO.—Just because I regard the child as mine, I feel that I oughtn't to bequeath him my filthy disposition.

POCA PENA.—How you talk! I'm not asking anything for myself; I'm only asking you to have a little fatherly feeling.

LUCERO.—It's just because I do have.

POCA PENA.—If my son's done away with, or if you have him done away with, I'll stick this knife in your ribs. Lucero, don't take my son!

LUCERO.—We'll have another.

POCA PENA.—Have mercy on me, Lucero!

LUCERO.—Change your tune.

POCA PENA.—You jail-bird, you!

(LUCERO *gives a contemptuous grin and, with the back of his hand, slaps his woman on the mouth. Moaning, she dabs at her lips with the corners of her handkerchief. At sight of the blood, the woman sobs more than ever, while the man gives a sneaking cough as he makes the sparks leap rhythmically from his briquet.* PEDRO GAILO, *the sacristan, standing in the portico of the church, lifts his arms.)*

PEDRO GAILO.—You'd better go somewhere else to set your bad example, and not here, in the very sight of God!

LUCERO.—God doesn't see what we do; his head's turned the other way.

PEDRO GAILO.—Sacrilegious!

LUCERO.—You're paying me a compliment! It's twenty years now since I've set foot in a church!

PEDRO GAILO.—So, you boast about being a friend of the Devil's?

LUCERO.—We're buddies.

PEDRO GAILO.—You're showing your teeth in a smile today, but the day will come when you'll gnash them.

LUCERO.—I'm not afraid of that day.

POCA PENA.—Even the wild beasts are afraid of it.

PEDRO GAILO.—Everything we do receives its reward or its punishment: Such is the doctrine of our holy mother Church.

LUCERO.—Oh, change your tune, old man. That's an old story by this time.

PEDRO GAILO.—Our Lord God has not deigned to signify to me that I should keep silent.

LUCERO.—Fine!

(An old woman, clad in a brown-cloth mantilla, appears under the portico, then another, followed by yet another, a little further behind. They come forward in a row. In the hollows of their hands they bear holy water, with which they sprinkle the tombs. The last one draws after her a four-wheeled cart, in which there is to be seen a sleeping, nodding, hydrocephalous dwarf. JUANA LA REINA *is an earthy shadow, who, with her monstrous child, goes begging, barefoot, at the fairs and pilgrimages; she interrogates the sacristan, whose sister she is.)*

JUANA LA REINA.—Why didn't you give communion at mass?

PEDRO GAILO.—There were no hosts in the chalice.

LA REINA.—And I wanted to receive my God! The earth is calling me.

PEDRO GAILO.—You have surely changed.

LA REINA.—My matrix is gnawing.

PEDRO GAILO.—The earth is our mother, the mother of all sinners! And my nephew, is he beginning to wake somewhat? He is beginning to understand a little, sister.

LA REINA.—The poor innocent!

(PEDRO GAILO *squints at the dwarf, who dandles his overgrown head in an idiotic fashion. His mother drives away the flies which*

have alighted on his thick-lipped mouth, above which there is the hint of a mustache. She goes through the cemetery, drawing the cart behind her, and goes out into the shady highway. The mountebank's dog, rearing on two legs, executes a sketchy dance-step as this sad and earthy silhouette goes by. The animal slowly drops down and, sticking its tail under it, begins howling as dogs howl in the presence of death. LUCERO *whistles, and the dog, on two legs once more, goes toward its master, who smiles and winks an eye.)*

LUCERO.—This beast has a bargain with my buddy, Satan.

PEDRO GAILO.—Until the day when some one exorcises him. Then he'll split like a clap of thunder.

LUCERO.—We'll both of us split.

PEDRO GAILO.—You're trying to down a doubt by speaking the truth.

LUCERO.—You've surely hit on my sin.

POCA PENA.—Nonsense!

LUCERO.—Come here, Coimbra! And pay attention to my question. Right paw for yes, left paw for no. You can use your tail to say I don't know. And now, tell me the truth, and don't lie. Our friend over there, is it true that his wife makes him a Don Cornelius?

(COIMBRA, *still on two legs, reflectively shakes her blackish-yellow head from side to side, jingling the bells on her ears. The prophetic impulse gradually comes over her, and she is motionless, her eyes fixed upon her master. Then, after a moment's hesitation, as the bells at her ears tinkle, she moves her left paw furiously up and down.)*

LUCERO.—Old man, Coimbra says no. And now, she's going to tell you something else. Coimbra, are you wise enough to tell me if our friend is going to wear a crown some day? Right paw for yes, left pay for no. You still have your tail, Miss, if you want to say I don't know.

(COIMBRA *wags her tail, barks and begins to hop about on two feet; and then, while her two fore-feet tremble slightly, first one and then the other, she looks inquiringly at the mountebank. The bells at her ears give a long and meaningful tinkle. The mountebank smiles and keeps on winking his eye. Suddenly, the bitch decides to lift her right paw.)*

LUCERO.—You're sure, Coimbra? Make a bow, Coimbra, and ask our friend's pardon for having slandered him.

PEDRO GAILO.—Low-lifed scum! A reprobate like you can't insult me.

LUCERO.—Old man, you ought to learn to take things with a laugh. On our way, Poca Pena!

PEDRO GAILO.—You'll laugh plenty in Hell.

(POCA PENA *wraps her infant in the folds of her shawl, and the mountebank takes the Trained Bird's cage on his back. They go off.)*

POCA PEN.—Have the heart of a father, Lucero!

LUCERO.—Shut your trap!

POCA PENA.—I'm tired of this slave's life; I'm going to leave you.

LUCERO.—If you think that I'm going to run after you, you're wrong!

POCA PENA.—You did it once, and you even killed a man.

LUCERO.—That wasn't what I meant to do.

POCA PENA.—If it was meant for me, why did you miss your mark?

LUCERO.—Change your tune! Is there some canary-grass for the bird?

POCA PENA.—He won't eat.

LUCERO.—Coimbra, where are we going to find another one? Supposing we ask old man Satan for one, what do you say?

POCA PENA.—Nonsense!

(The infant, in its mother's arms, starts crying, while over the vagabond's shoulder swings the cage of the little good-luck-bird. In the gilding rays of the sun, it looks like the Palace of Illusion.)

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE POET-PRECURSORS

Antonio Machado

Antonio Machado was born at Seville, in 1875. He has been the constant friend of Unamuno, and is generally regarded as of the generation of '98. After a short travel-period, he was a professor of French at Soria and at Baeza; he now follows the same profession at Segovia, where he continues to lead a solitary existence, his chief diversions being walking and meditation. (J. C.)

"His monotonous life, relieved in the beginning by a little travel, and then struck by sorrow, has finally taken root in an austere environment, and has been devoted since then to solitude. It would seem that it is not without a consciousness of the futility of all effort that, at rare intervals, it finds a concrete expression in a short poem that is like a sigh." (See Cassou's Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 97ff.)*

Machado was the close friend of the Nicaraguan poet, Rubén Darío, whose influence has been so great on all modern Spanish poetry. From the Latin Quarter in Paris, Darío brought to Spain the good and the bad in French Symbolism; he was instrumental in rescuing peninsular poetry from the academic morass, and introduced into it a new music and a new suppleness, opening the way for the return to Gongorism; he has been called the Spanish-American Whitman.

Machado's own verse is almost musicless, or perhaps one might say that its music is a mute one. An Andalusian, although his name is Portuguese, Machado writes a poem that is like a siesta in the Andalusian sun; his poems have the inexpressible quality of dreams, and they are haunted by a dream-like nostalgia. In this has been seen a certain Arabic trait.

"The motives and events," says M. Cassou, "which one meets with in his poems are moving only by their intense sobriety: a fountain in an abandoned patio, the public square of a little provincial village in the sun, a nocturnal promenade, a funeral. . . . One finds one's self wandering about in a vagabond, impossibly faery-like world, a world of poverty. Poverty: that is the prime quality of these poems, as it is the prime quality of the Castilian landscape; but amid this desolation of simple-sounding words, which are, often, repeated, there will suddenly appear an expression, an unexpected countenance, an emotion which grips the reader by the throat. . . . A spot of color, often, serves to fix a detail: the flash of a balcony, a light, a flower drooping in the sun, a shout beneath the summer sky, a young girl's face."

Machado's early verse is represented in the collections: Soledades, *1903;* Galerías, *1912;* Campos de Castilla, *1912. These collections are combined in the volume,* Poesias completas, *1917. Other collections have appeared more recently.*

M. Cassou compares Machado to Manuel de Falla in music, and adds: "He is for me the greatest of all the Spanish poets."

AT THE BURIAL OF A FRIEND

They gave him earth, one horrible afternoon
Of the month of July, under a fiery sun.

At a step from the open sepulchre
There were roses with rotting petals
Amongst geraniums whose scent was keen
And whose flowers were red. The sky
Pure and blue. A breeze
That was strong and dry was blowing.

Suspended from the great cords,
The coffin was let down,
Heavily, to the bottom of the ditch,
By the two gravediggers. . . .

And, as it came to rest, it struck with a loud, solemn noise, in the silence.

The thud of a coffin on the earth is a thing
That is, absolutely, serious.

Against the black box broke
The heavy, dusty lumps of earth. . . .

The air drew its whitish breath
From the deep ditch.

—And thou, already shadowless, sleepest and restest.
Long peace to thy bones. . . .

Definitively,
Sleep thou, a quiet, and real, sleep.

. . . . .

POEM

The street in shadow. The high old mansions hide
The dying sun; there are echoes of light in the balconies.

Do you not see, in the charm of that flowered balcony,
The rosy oval of a face you know?

The image, behind the pane, with its equivocal reflection,
Gleams and vanishes, like an old daguerreotype.

In the street only the sound of your step is heard.
Slowly the echoes of its passing die away.

Oh, anguish. The heart grows heavy and hurts. "Is it she?"
It could not be. . . . Go on. . . . The star in the sky.

CHILDISH DREAM

A clear night
Of holiday and moonlight
Night of my dreams
Night of joy

—my soul was brightness
That, to-day, is all fog
My hair
Was not yet black—

The youngest fairy
Took me in her arms
When that joyous holiday
Burned in the square

So, in the crackling
Of the illuminations
Love wove
Its skeins of dances

And in that night
Of holiday and moonlight

Night of my dreams
Night of joy

The youngest fairy
Kissed my forehead. . . .
With her fine hand
Said her goodbyes to me

All the rose trees
Give their perfumes
All the loves
Unfold love

. . . . .

POEM

The loved house
In which she lived
Shows,
On a pile of rubble, ruined
And demolished
A shapeless, wooden skeleton
Black, eaten away.

The moon throws its clear light
In dreams that gleam like silver
On the windows. Ill-dressed, sad,
I walk through the old street.

(*Translated by* Thomas McGreevy.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Juan Ramón Jiménez

Juan Ramón Jiménez, an Arab of Andalusia, born at Moguer, in 1881, has had a very wide and deep influence upon the younger generation. He made his literary début with the Noventa y ocho *('98) group, if group it may be called. His early books bore such significant titles as* Arias tristes, Jardines Lejanos, *etc. For Jiménez is in the Darío-French-Symbolist stream, and his work is marked by a* maladive *musicality and a morbidity that is at times reminiscent of*

Albert Samain. But the Spanish poet quickly developed more depth. His work is marked by a lyric abundance combined with a lyric purity and perfectedness. He has an exquisite sensitivity and a good mind; his Weltanschauung *reflects a certain oriental pantheism, which not infrequently achieves a delirious expression. His poems, as a rule, are short, emotionally moving and affecting. He has published two anthologies of his own work which enable the reader to follow his development. Jiménez' muse runs the scale, from the plaintive balladditties with which he began to such effusions as his* Eternidades *and his* Piedra y Cielo. *In prose, he is something of a cross between Mallarmé and Francis Jammes.—See Cassou's* Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 104ff.*

From ELEGIES (1908)

The dazzling whiteness of my first love
At the sweet, sad sound of reveille!
What celestial joy was it that opened those oriental gardens
To my youthful soul, that morning?
It was a holiday. All pallid sorrow died out
In the green of false springtime;
Everything was charged with laughter, with flowers.
The ground was rushes, the air was pennons.

And that sweet blue night, on that bench,
Under the doubled shadow of the drooping acacia,
While the moon gave its white flax to the world,
She said she had loved me all her life long.

Alas! I would live through all my sorrows again,
Even the darkest, to see such a morning
As that on which the sun purified my brow
At the sweet, sad sound of reveille.

. . . . .

From THE DIARY OF A NEWLY-MARRIED MAN (1916)

Remorse

(Between Philadelphia and New York, a rainy night, May 24.)

Must you acquiesce, my soul,
In forgetting in the morning?
If four great nails, well nailed,
My soul, right into your entrails,
Were to open four great, pure roses
From those four livid words
That he will hold nailed
In his kind heart
From then on!

Must you acquiesce
Merely in being quite happy,
Soul?

From STONE AND HEAVEN (1917–1918)

Dream Nocturne

The earth leads by the earth.
But, sea,
You lead by the heavens.
With what security of gold and silver light
Do the stars mark the road for us!
One would think
That the earth was the road
Of the body,
That the sea was the road
Of the soul.
Yes. It seems
That the soul is the only traveler
Of the sea; that the body, alone,
Remains behind, on the beach,
Without her, saying goodbye,
Heavy, cold, as though dead.

How like
Is a journey by sea
To death,
To eternal life!

(*Translated by* Thomas McGreevy.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE NEW GENERATION

Ramón Pérez de Ayala

Ramón Pérez de Ayala, poet, essayist, journalist and novelist, was born in 1880. He began by writing verse not wholly unlike that of Francis Jammes. His mordant genius has been described by M. Cassou in the Introduction to this section. Ayala has been compared to the French Abel Hermant. With an indubitable native gift for writing, he evidences wide linguistic resources and a seemingly inexhaustible vocabulary. His style is rich and amazingly facile, and is marked by a certain Jesuitical touch of baroque academicism. Ayala is familiar with British culture and with the English humorists, but he remains nothing if not a Spanish humorist; his humor has the distinguishing Spanish air of subdued and jocular pedantry.

Ayala's A.M.D.G., *published in 1910, is a masterpiece of black irony, directed against Jesuit education. Nevertheless, there is something of the priest in Ayala,—something of the priest and something of the* torero; *and this writer, who, on one side, displays certain preoccupations with sexual psychology, and who has enunciated a highly interesting, original and by no means superficial theory of Don-Juanism, excels in the painting of just such mournful celibate types as curates and bull-fighters.*

Belarmino y Apolonio, *from which the following chapter is taken, is, according to M. Cassou, "assuredly one of the greatest Spanish books since* Don Quixote." *It is by way of being a Spanish* Bouvard et Pecuchet, *and M. Cassou inquires as to whether this is not, possibly, the book that Flaubert dreamed of writing. (Flaubert, it is known, was greatly under the spell of Cervantes.) In this book, we get a whiff of that "oily flavor of the kitchen and the sacristy" of*

which M. Cassou has already spoken. Ayala is at his best in this boarding-house atmosphere, the atmosphere of the casas de huespedes.

Under Ayala's fantasy, there lies a great and devastating pessimism, a caricatural conception of life and the world. His writing is, in a manner, a species of danse macabre, *although the author has, also, a gentler, humanistic side.*

Ayala has won considerable attention as an essayist. See the collections Las Mascaras *and* Politica y Toros. *His article against the dramatist Benevente aroused particular controversy.*

The Tres Novelas poematicas de la vida española *includes the* Prometeo *the* Luz de Domingo *and the* Caida de los Limones.

See Cassou's Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 128ff.*

DON GUILLÉN AND LA PINTA

(*From* "BELARMINO Y APOLONIO")

One Tuesday in Holy Week, at luncheon, there appeared at our table a new boarder: a prebendal cleric. Had I met him in the street, had I sat opposite him in the tram or beside him in a railway-station buffet, I should barely have given him an absent-minded glance. But here we were gathered about a *casa de huespedes* table. The worthy Don Amaranto was right. All the other boarders and myself at once began brazenly staring at this grand clergyman, as if it was a duty we had to perform. But he was quite indifferent to our curiosity. Bull-fighters, priests and comedians are not annoyed by being stared at, accustomed as they are to the limelight, in the ring, on the stage, or in the pulpit.

The "grand clergyman," I remarked above, and no adjective could have been better chosen. He looked like a brand-new, shiny cardboard saint. His glistening merino cassock might have been varnished, and his neckband was a splash of red, almost of crimson. His face, where his mustache and beard had been shaved away, was a pale-blue-to-purple color, and the rest of his countenance was extremely ruddy, while his eyes were dark and deep-set. He was forty at the most; and once one got over one's first impression of being in the presence of a little artificial saint, one discovered in the priest's physiognomy something or other that was distinctly per-

sonal and suggestive. The ruddiness of his cheeks was pathologic; he must suffer from heart-trouble. But he made a fine appearance; and after all, he was quite young for the ecclesiastical dignity that his costume proclaimed. A malicious person might have deduced that he had attained his rank with the omnipotent aid of petticoats; but on the other hand, there was nothing about him that suggested the "ladies' man,"—nothing, even, to indicate that he was especially popular with the sex. His was not the assurance of the conquering curate, nor the hypocritical humility and sweetness of the little skirt-clinging clergyman. If he owed his rise in the world to the women, it probably had been without any solicitation on his part. Such, at least, were my meditations between the soup and the roast.

Doña Emerenciana, an eldering widow who, from lack of better-born gallants, spent the greater part of her life in running after Fidel, our waiter,—Doña Emerenciana was visibly on pins and needles, and she was the first to address the new boarder.

"Don't you find it fearfully warm in Madrid? And here it is, only April! I suppose you come from a cooler province, Don—— May I inquire your name?"

"My name is Pedro, Lope, Francisco, Guillén, Euripides, take your choice," replied the clergyman, in a deep, musical voice and with a frank and winning smile.

We all smiled in turn, except the old lady, who had not yet made up her mind whether this reply was a serious or an ironical one.

"You are very funny!" she exclaimed at length, trusting that it was irony.

"No, Madam," the priest informed her, "I didn't say that to be funny."

"But Euripides, that's no Christian name, is it? If it is, it must come from the province of Palencia, for they do have the oddest names down there."

"No, Madam, it is not a Christian name, but it seems that didn't make any difference to the curate who christened me. And if they canonize me, there'll be a St. Euripides, the first of the name."

"How funny you are! But thank heaven, you have plenty of first names."

"It was a whim of my father's. He was a playwright and a shoemaker, or a shoemaker and a playwright, according to the order of precedence that you prefer. My baptismal names are those of the most famous dramatists of old: Pedro Calderón de la Barca; Lope de Vega; Francisco de Rojas Zorilla——"

"I've heard of that Zorilla; he was the author of *Tenorio;*[1] I heard of him when I was a girl," broke in Doña Emerenciana.

"Guillén de Castro," continued the priest with a smile, "Euripides——"

As he paused for a second, Doña Emerenciana gave a start:

"Euripides who?"

"Euripides López y Rodriguez," replied the priest, as solemn as an owl.

"He must have been from the lower classes," was Doña Emerenciana's comment. "And now, what are we going to call you?"

"Some call me by one name and some by another. Pick the one you like."

"I prefer Guillén."

"The ladies always do," observed Don Guillén, with a satirical inflection.

"So far as I'm concerned, if you don't mind, I'm going to call you Mr. Euripides; it has more of a republican flavor," put in Don Celedonio de Obeso, an avowed atheist and an aggressive republican, a paltry chap at bottom, as plain as mud. For of course, we had to have one recognized republican at our boardinghouse-table. This Don Celedonio had become the leader of the republican party of Tarazona. He had the gift of gab and a nanny-goat beard.

"As you like," said Don Guillén, on the spur of the moment.

Before the meal was over, Don Guillén had won everyone's confidence and good will,—to such an extent that Don Celedonio had the nerve to ask him, point-blank:

"Do you believe in God?"

"Do you believe in the Republic?" countered Don Guillén, unperturbed.

"Yes, like the good republican that I am."

"And I, as a priest, am a believer."

"No intelligent person believes in God."

"I have heard intelligent persons say: 'No intelligent person believes in the Republic.' "

"But the primitive Christians," and our Don Obeso hastily lowered his voice, "the primitive Christians were republicans."

"Worse than that, they were anarchists. But seeing that the

[1] The point here lies in Doña Emerenciana's confusion of the two dramatists, Rojas-Zorilla, born in 1607, and José Zorilla, 1818–1893, the author of *Don Juan Tenorio,* an extremely popular piece in the Spanish romantic theatre. (*Translator's Note.*)

Christians, starting with the idea of God, achieved that of the Republic, so you, starting with the Republic, might very well attain to the idea of God."

"I'm not putting down any money on it," said Don Celedonio; and Don Guillén laughed in friendly fashion at this witticism.

It is a remarkable fact that, during the whole of this conversation, Don Guillén had not exhibited the least acrimoniousness; he had not been the least bit belligerent or contemptuous. Our good-will toward him grew. As we left the dining-room, Don Celedonio whispered to me: "He's a good scout! Those curates are all right!"

After lunch, I learned that Don Guillén was connected with the Cathedral of Castrofuerte, and that he was the Holy Week preacher in the chapel of the Royal Palace. He must surely be a "spell-binder."

Doña Trina's house harbored so many boarders and transient guests that the huge apartment in the calle de Hortaleza, the mother country so to speak, was not big enough to hold them, and Doña Trina had had to send out colonies into the adjoining streets and about the neighborhood. One of these colonies, the one where I had set up my household gods, was in the calle de la Reina. I mention this by way of emphasizing the fact that the colonials enjoyed more freedom, especially at night, than did the residents of the mother country. During the night hours, these streets and side-streets were a rendezvous and a constant market-place for frightful prostitutes and their unprepossessing male attendants. To get to my room, I was forced to make my way through this endless army of occupation; and as I did so, I was subject to a constant fire from the courtezans, and was harassed by verbal and more imperious invitations, for occasionally one of them would slip her arm through my own. To get rid of them, and also for the sake of a little rest, I would sometimes look in at the little café where all the girls hung out. I would make myself agreeable to the fiercest of the lot, and would leave them well fed, satisfied and in a much better humor. They aroused my sympathy, and I was always considerate with them. I admit that prostitution is a terrible disgrace and one that stinks to heaven. But is one to blame the ulcer if it finds lodging in a rotten body, where it quite naturally has a chance to spread out? In a society in which everything is prostituted, feminine prostitution is almost praiseworthy, for the reason that it is a warning symptom. Often, after having put them into a better frame of mind, I would stay in the little café for a while to talk to these unfortunate creatures. I drew

a great deal of spiritual profit from their conversation, for pity such as they inspired is a purge for the soul. I also observed the characters, amazing, most of them, which were to be met with here in this dive. From the very first, my curiosity was aroused by one particular woman. She was a nice, quiet blonde, and her face was not all plastered up and rouged like the others. She was always alone, and always sat without stirring, over in a corner, a glass of coffee in front of her, which she never touched. She looked like a Raphael virgin, a trifle faded. One evening, after I had stood looking at this girl for a long time, the *"Piernavieja"* or "Old Peg-Leg," so called because she dragged one leg a little,—"Old Peg-Leg," who was the most tattered and aggressive unit in the army of occupation, said to me:

"What are you looking at? That shrimp over there? That's Angustias, la Pinta. She lives with the 'Gallowsbird.' He's a good-for-nothing bum; he makes her stay here till he comes past to pick her up in the morning."

"Ask her to come over and have something," I said to the *Piernavieja.*

"Hey, there!" cried my limping friend. "Come over here, la Pinta. This gentleman's asking you to have something."

La Pinta blushed and excused herself. It was in vain that the *Piernavieja* insisted.

"La Pinta," I said, "is that a nickname?"

"Not at all; it's her right name. Her name is Angustias Pinto. What an idea, to keep your family name in a trade like ours! She's just a stick, no good for anything."

Little by little after a number of evenings, I became friends with la Pinta. She was a meek little thing, sad and not at all talkative, or, as the *Piernavieja* had put it, a stick, no good for anything. One night, she told me that she was a little over thirty; she didn't look it. Another night, she told me where she was born: in the town of Pilares. But that evening—I remember very well—that Tuesday evening of Holy Week, the evening of the day that the ruddy and jovial canon had made his appearance among our "paying-guests," la Pinta had been astonishingly communicative.

"My father was a shoemaker, but he was something more—a bilateral philosopher, as he called himself. I heard those big words so often when I was young that I have never forgotten them. The professors from the university used to come to the shop where we

lived. To hear my mother tell it,—she had a very bad temper—my father was the drone of the hive, and those who came to listen to him were simply making a fool of him. But my father was a saint."

Involuntarily, I thought of Don Pedro-Guillén-Euripides, son of a shoemaker and a dramatist. La Pinta went on:

"It was a curate who was my undoing."

"The villain!" I muttered, instinctively.

"No, he was not a villain," la Pinta corrected me, and she turned to me her long-suffering face. "He was not a curate then; he was only a seminary student. He wanted to marry me. We went away together. His father came and got him. My mother refused to take me back. And after that, well, you can see—— But I am sure my sweetheart loves me yet. His father, you know, couldn't stand my family. I wonder what's become of him, Perico——?"

"Was that his name, Perico?"

"Yes, Perico Caramanzana. And how his name suited him. His face was as ripe and rosy and as merry as an apple."

"Is that why they called him Caramanzana (apple-face)?"

"It's his real name. His father's name is Apolonio Caramanzana. You must have heard of him. Ah! he was the best shoemaker in Spain. Even the gentlemen from Bilbao and Barcelona used to come to have their shoes made by him. He also wrote plays."

I had a good deal on my mind as I left the café that evening. I went to bed, but it was a long time before I could sleep. In the room next to mine, I could hear a loud clearing of the throat, followed by a deep sigh. It was Don Guillén. A diabolic idea came to me: "What if, tomorrow, I were to bring la Pinta to Don Guillén's room?" I fell asleep turning this idea over in my mind.

The next day, a fast-day, Don Guillén did not appear at table.

"Where is Señor Caramanzana?" inquired the widow, who had already succeeded in learning the canon's family name.

"He's not eating today," replied Fidel; "his stomach's a little squeamish. Haven't you noticed how flushed he is?"

"It's undoubtedly pyrosis," said Don Celedonio. "All the monks and clergy have pyrosis, from eating too much rich food and from too much alcohol."

"That will be enough from you, you old heretic," scolded Doña Emerenciana, threatening him with her fan.

"By the way, Fidel, I hope you haven't forgotten what I told you. I hope you've told our landlady that all this farce about fast days

and other days doesn't mean a thing to me, and that, even on the holy days of Holy Week, I want fish and meat. I mix them or jumble them or whatever you choose to call it."

This from Don Celedonio.

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph! What a Judas Iscariot! It's a good thing that Don Guillén isn't here; he'd blush to listen to such blasphemy."

But Fidel, the waiter, wore a sly smile.

When I had done eating, I left the mother country and set out for the colonies. Some twenty paces in front of me was Fidel, carrying a large tray covered with a napkin.

"Pst!" And he motioned with his head for me to come up. "Lift up the napkin."

I lifted a corner of it and discovered a plentiful supply of food, including a good healthy slice of roast beef.

"It's Don Guillén's dinner," said the waiter. "He may not mix 'em or jumble 'em or whatever you call it; but one thing's certain, he's not doing without his meat."

At this moment, Don Guillén's door opened, and the dark figure of the priest himself was outlined against a rectangle of grizzled light; he had caught me in the act,—a domestic spy, shameful and ashamed. His tousled hair lighted up like a halo about his head. He wore red morocco slippers. Those two details struck me like a pair of off-key notes, during that brief moment of surprise and silent suspense: that beaming aureole and the bleeding feet.

"Come in," he said; then he added, for my benefit: "Come in, Sir!"

I accepted. I had not yet recovered from the humiliation I felt.

"Sit down," he insisted.

I wanted to make my apologies and go; but I was conscious of a note of entreaty in the canon's voice, as he said to me:

"Won't you give me the honor of your company for a moment, please?"

This request and the tone of voice in which it was uttered made me my normal self once more. I sat down beside a table littered with books, papers, pipes, spectacles and, enthroned amid these intellectual tools and accessories, the photograph of a woman in a silver frame, like a reliquary. I ventured to glance at it, discreetly. It was like one of Raphael's child virgins, those of his Umbrian period.

"Put the tray here, Fidel. You brought some wine? Take it back; I have some that's better."

He turned to me.

"What are you looking at, that frame? It's a sixteenth-century reliquary, a gem."

"No, I was looking at the portrait."

"One of my sisters; she's no more."

"No more?"

"Lost; dropped out of sight."

"Ah, so she's dead," I observed doubtfully, to give him the opening for an explanation.

"It was some years ago." Then, after a pause: "Do have a little glass of cognac."

He brought out a bottle of old cognac and another of mellow wine, taking them from a pig's-skin bag the elegance of which was more befitting a man of the world than a clergyman. He sat down at the table; and the longer I looked at him, the less he seemed to me a priest, and the more he seemed a man of the world.

"By the merest accident," he remarked, as he ate leisurely, "you have invaded my personal life. If, a moment ago, when I found you——"

"In the act of spying upon you," I broke in; "but it was at the waiter's suggestion, and without knowing what it was all about."

"What difference does it make? What I was going to say was that if, at that moment, I had retired, you would have taken me for an unscrupulous and insincere priest. I couldn't let you go away without a few explanations."

"It is I who should——"

"You? Why? Putting the worst possible construction upon matters, your curiosity got the better of you slightly; while I, in the opinion of the timorous, have been guilty of a grave sin."

"But I am not one of the timorous."

"Nevertheless, I owe you an explanation. Just as, in the State, there are certain artificial crimes, so in the Church there are artificial sins. Artificial crimes and sins are those which, without offending or abating either justice or dogma, the respective pivots of Church and State, are, yet, a contravention of or a disobedience to certain disciplinary regulations which are purely accidental and temporal by nature. Among these temporal regulations is the obligation to fast four days during Holy Week. The idea might very well occur to the present pope or his successor to diminish or even to abolish that

obligation. The State is a material community sustained by mutual interests; the Church is a spiritual community sustained by mutual love. And the disciplinary spirit of the Church is quite different from that of the State. In the State, discipline is a matter of the interests involved; for without discipline, the common interest would not be protected. In the Church, discipline is a matter of generous impulses; it is the will to sacrifice. Just as lovers, to make sure of their mutual love, put that love to the test by all sorts of whimsical demands,—for to love is to obey—so the Church imposes upon the faithful certain disciplinary obligations, by way of spurring on the slothful and compelling them to evince their love by putting it into practice. But for those persons, priests or laymen, whose faith is well-grounded and whose minds are wholesome, such disciplinary obligations are of no avail. The essential thing is dogma. The State readily grants the right of free thought,—the mind is never guilty —but do not try to carry that freedom over into action, for discipline would thereby be impaired. The Church is tolerant in the matter of actions and intransigent in the matter of ideas: it is only in thought that we sin. All sins, however monstrous they may be, are given absolution in the confessional; but the slightest doubt or lack of faith on the part of the sinner, and we are forbidden to absolve him. All that I have just said to you is mere common sense, and so, must be kept a secret from all those, priests or laymen, who are not endowed with common sense. Do you understand?

"I understand, I understand," I said approvingly. The truth is, I had understood very well all that he had said; that was not so hard to do. But I did not understand him. What sort of man was this sitting in front of me, philosophizing as he ate, masticating and reasoning so nonchalantly, and with such an air of worldly serenity, dressed like a worldling and without any obvious sign of his ecclesiastical state, and who, even as he spoke, would occasionally glance at the portrait of a woman whom he himself had pushed down into the nameless abyss of prostitution? What manner of man was he? A hedonist? An unbeliever? A hypocrite and a sophist, deceiving himself and others? A disillusioned being? A tormented soul? The explanation he had just given me interested me far less than all this. What difference did it make to me whether he fasted or not?

What happened now was like one of those cases of immediate thought-transference which sometimes occur between two persons who are extremely intimate.

"But that," he said, "is the least of your concerns, whether I fast

or not. The important thing is that, by the merest accident, you have been led to invade my private life, my life as a man. For all of us, monks, curates and ecclesiastical big-wigs, we all of us, under our merino and our furbelows, are men in disguise. I can say with the pagan poet: *Homo sum.*

I saw him again, in imagination, with the beaming aureole and the flaming-red feet.

"You have surprised me without my ministerial trappings. When you came upon me, I was no longer God's minister, but one of God's creatures, wretched and imperfect, like all His creatures. In a few hours, I shall be speaking before the King, or rather, over the King; and it will be something more than a few pulpit steps that lift me above the crowned head of the Lord's anointed; the distance will be an infinite one, for the reason that I shall stand for that incorruptible and eternal consciousness which soars over thrones, over sceptres and over empires, at an inaccessible height. But here, in this mean little room, seated opposite you, I am no longer the voice of conscience; I am but a miserable concave object filled with darkness, where the voice of conscience echoes vainly."

This was becoming serious. Not knowing what to say, I sat there with my head dropped, and fixed my gaze upon a certain point, which chanced to be the portrait in the reliquary.

"You like that frame?" inquired Don Guillén.

"I like the portrait. I know that woman," I asserted bluntly.

Don Guillén was not taken aback.

"You have made a mistake," he said. "It is undoubtedly another very similar face that you have in mind. You could not know that woman. I have already told you that she is my sister, and that she is no more."

He stressed the words *sister* and *no more.*

Following his dinner, Don Guillén took a small glass of cognac, and speeded up the conversation, which took a humorous and a lively turn. He was a man as witty as he was intelligent.

At the moment of leaving, he said to me:

"I shan't be eating at the table these days. What do you say if we dine together, here in my room? How Doña Emerenciana would envy you!"

In the course of these surreptitious dinners, and during the leisurely moments after dinner, my friend, Don Guillén, told me his story by snatches, the story of Angustias Pinto and that of their fathers, Belarmino and Apolonio. And then, later, I made certain

discoveries of my own which were so important as to cause the tale of Caramanzana and la Pinta to take a secondary place in my mind.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

José Ortega y Gasset

José Ortega y Gasset is professor of metaphysics in the University of Madrid and editor of the important Revista de Occidente. *He was born in 1883. As a philosopher, he is possessed of a facile and subtle intelligence. An artist by temperament and a resourceful writer, he has no fear of the frivolous, but even seeks it out. In dealing with a question or a problem, he is inclined to situate it in the Nietzschean light of the present, of actuality. He takes the position of spectator, as is indicated by the title,* El Espectador, *under which he has collected five or six volumes of his essays. The universality and actuality of his interests came, following the Generation of '98, as something new in Spain, and led to a number of new organs being founded. The* Revista de Occidente *has been noted for its popularization of the latest German philosophy in Spain: Simmel, Keyserling, Spengler, Max Scheler. All this has had a very direct and powerful effect upon the formation of Spanish youth of the day. Ortega, on the whole, is inclined to leave politics alone, but he has had his say on the* mal espagnol: Meditaciones del Quijote, *1914;* España invertenrada. *He believes that Spain's normal state is a permanent decadence. His influence had a good deal to do with the abolition of the National Problem.*

Ortega has undergone a number of influences: Valéry's rationalistic nihilism; Cocteau's aesthetic lucidity; Cubistic neo-classicism. He is responsible for the doctrine of the "Dehumanization of Art" which has determined the attitude of the young Vanguardia. (La Deshumanización del Arte.)

Ortega's view of the act of knowing *is enlightening in connection with the following paper. "Knowing," says M. Cassou, "impresses him as being merely a mode of dominating the object by setting it up, capriciously, where it may be seen from various points of view." Ortega thus becomes the inventor of a relativistic criticism.*

The editor of the Revista de Occidente *is the type of intellectual European, interested in the larger exchange of ideas; he is an apostle*

of international civility. But M. Cassou believes that, if one looked closely enough, one might be able to find in Ortega a certain aspect of flight and of peninsular independence.

It was by the following paper that Señor Ortega y Gasset became widely known to the French literary world. This essay was published in the Hommage à Marcel Proust, *1927.*

See Cassou: Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 134ff.*

TIME, DISTANCE AND FORM IN PROUST

Merely a Contribution to Proustian Studies

This is an occasion when death, in reaping a life, has cut off our gratifications. Many people, in many lands, had built their budget of future pleasures upon the forthcoming volumes of Proust. That the public should thus *wait for* an author's next work is, undoubtedly, an unusual phenomenon and one that we have not witnessed for a long time. There are, it is true, highly estimable writers to whom we are glad to open the door, when they come knocking at our libraries. But if we receive them with propriety and even with respect, this is not to say that they are welcome visitors. To these gentlemen, writing means assuming a certain attitude. Inspired by a virtuous consistency, they persist in going through, for our benefit, their limited repertory of stereotyped *"tableaux vivants."* And the inevitable consequence is that, after a few performances, we no longer feel an urgent need to see the show again.

But there is another type of writer. Those who have had the good luck or the genius to discover a vein of "things." Their position is very like that of the scientist who has made a discovery. With an overwhelming simplicity and obviousness, they have become conscious of the fact that their feet were gliding along a new area of aesthetic possibilities. If, to designate the first type of writer, we commonly employ the vague and mystic word, "creators," we must, to designate the second type, employ the word, "inventors," in the most Latin sense of the term. They are, as a matter of fact, discoverers who have found a new fauna concealed in inviolate landscapes, or who at least have come upon a new manner of seeing, a simple

optical law, the formula for an unaccustomed index of refraction. Their position is, accordingly, a good deal surer one, for the reason that their work, while always self-identical, is at the same time a promise of new things and virgin spectacles; and it is not likely that we should be lacking, under such circumstances, in a desire to see the spectacle. When Plato was looking for a substantial body corporate under which to enroll the philosophers, he was able to find no better a classification for them than that of *philotheamones,* those who like to look. It no doubt occurred to him that man's most enduring virtue is a certain visual enthusiasm.

Marcel Proust is one of these "inventors." Amid a contemporary production that is so freakish and unnecessitated, his work, on the contrary, impresses us as something that had to be. Without it, there would be a big gap in the literary evolution of the nineteenth century, an absence of clearly defined contours. It may even be added, by way of underscoring this trait of necessity, that Proust's work was done a little too late; we have but to analyze it to discover a slight anachronism.

Proust's "inventions" are of the first order, inasmuch as they bear a relation to the simplest components of the literary object. We meet here with nothing less than a new manner of dealing with time and of installing one's self in space.

If, by way of conveying to one who had not read him an idea of what Proust is like, we were to begin by enumerating his subjects—sojourn in a homely village, Swann's love, sentimental disportings of a young lad and a lass against a rustic background, in the Champs-Elysées, a summer on the Normandy coast, in a hôtel de luxe, looking out over a restless sea, over which slide the forms of Nereids, the faces of *jeunes filles en fleur,* etc.—we would find at once that such an enumeration gets us nowhere, and that these subjects, with which novelists have dealt time and time again, are insufficient when it comes to defining what it is that Proust gives us. Some years ago, there was a poor hunchback who was in the habit of going every day to the St. Isidor Library. He was so short that it was inconvenient for him to read at the desk, and so, he would invariably come up to the librarian on duty and ask for a dictionary. "Which one?" the attendant would graciously inquire, "Latin, French, English?" And the little hunchback would reply: "Oh, that doesn't make any difference; it's to sit on."

One would be committing the same mistake as the librarian, if one were to undertake to place Claude Monet by stating that he had

painted Notre Dame and the gare Saint-Lazare, or Degas by remarking that he had portrayed laundresses, danseuses and jockeys. The truth is, in the case of these two painters, the subject is but a pretext; they have painted these things as they might have painted others that are altogether different. The important thing for them, the effective motive of their canvases, is aerial perspective, that contexture of chromatic vibrations with which objects, whatever they may be, are surrounded, and in which they live their own splendid existence.

This is somewhat the case with Proust. The subjects of the novel, which come and go over the surface of his work, possess for him but a contiguous and secondary interest. They are as buoys drifting upon the abysmal stream of memory. Up to the present time, the writer had handled his memories as materials with which to reconstruct the past. But the data of memory are insufficient, and of the former reality retain but an excerpt that is quite arbitrary. The traditional novelist, therefore, rounds out his memories with observation of the present; he adds to them hypotheses and conventional ideas, thus mingling with the authentic stuff of memory other and fraudulent elements. This method has a meaning, when applied, as it commonly is, to the restoration of past things, that is to say, to the simulation for those things of a new present and actuality. But Proust's design is the opposite of this. He does not employ his memories as material for the reconstruction of old realities; on the contrary, what he desires literally to rebuild is his memories themselves, and for this he makes use of all sorts of means—observation of the present, analysis of reflection, psychological explanations. It is not, then, things that are remembered, but the memory of things itself that is Proust's general theme. Here, for the first time, memories are no longer treated as the medium with which one describes a thing; they have become, for the present, the thing described itself. It is for this reason that the author, as a rule, does not add to memory those other aspects of reality which the memory has not retained; he leaves his memory intact, as it is, objectively incomplete, mutilated it may be; and moving those wretched stumps that are left it in a spectral detachment. There is one very suggestive page where Proust is speaking of trees upon a knoll, behind which there was something very important, but a something which time had swept away, abolished from the memory. The author struggles in vain to retrieve that which eludes him, by way of giving us in its integrity this fragment of decimated landscape, those three trees,

the solitary survivors of a mental catastrophe, of a stormy oblivion.

The subjects of the novel are, thus, with Proust, mere pretexts, a species of *spiracula,* airholes, doors to the hive, from which the buzzing swarms of reminiscence fly away. It is not for nothing that Proust has given to his work the general title of: *A la recherche du temps perdu.* He thereby scrupulously renounces any intention of imposing upon the past the anatomy of the present; he rigorously abstains from all intervention, being guided as he is by the firm resolve to avoid all construction. From the depths of the soul there surges upward and arises a memory, even as, at night, a constellation stands out, movingly, against the horizon-line. Proust represses all desire for restoration, and limits himself to describing what he sees emerging from his memory. In place of restoring *le temps perdu,* he takes a pleasure in building up the ruin. It might be said that, with him, the genre *mémoires* achieves the dignity of a pure literary method.

So much for the time-relation. But still more amazing and still more dumfounding is his inventiveness in the order of space.

The number of pages have been counted which Proust has written to tell us that his grandmother was taking her temperature. And indeed, it is impossible to speak of Proust without observing how prolix and minute he is, his tiny details. But prolixness and minuteness here, far from being defects, become two powerful sources of inspiration, two new muses to be added to the community of nine. Proust has need of being prolix and minute, for the very simple reason that he comes a good deal closer up to objects than is usual. He is the discoverer of a new distance between us and things. This simple reformation has had results—as I have already said—so dumfounding that nearly the whole of the preceding literary output takes on the appearance of a bird's-eye-view literature, grossly panoramic if one compares it to this deliciously myopic talent.

Our vital conventions impose upon each object a certain distance, which impresses us as affording the best possible view of that object. When we wish to have a perfect view of a stone, we bring it up to our eyes until we can see the porosity. But if we wish to contemplate a cathedral, we must give up all idea of inspecting the pores in its stones, and must fall back in order to enlarge the bounds of the field of vision. The organic utilitarianism that governs life is charged with regulating the norms of these varying distances. But the poets, perhaps, have been guilty of an error in assuming that this system of distances, excellent for the ordinary purposes of life, is likewise

good for art. Marcel Proust, tired, possibly, of always seeing a hand drawn as if it were a monument, brings it up close to his eyes and, with the horizon in behind, is surprised to behold the appearance in the foreground of a suggestive landscape, with porous valleys following Lilliputian forests of hair. This, naturally, is but a way of putting the thing; for what interests Proust is not the hands, nor, in general, the things pertaining to the body, but rather the inner fauna and flora. He rectifies the distance between us and human feelings, and breaks with that tradition which would describe them as monuments.

It would not, I think, be a wholly uninteresting proceeding to go further into this question, and to endeavor to establish how it is this radical transformation of the literary perspective takes place in Proust.

When a primitive artist depicts a vase or a tree, he begins by supposing that everything really possesses a profile, that is, an indubitable contour, an external form which, like a well defined frontier, separates it, isolates it from all the rest. To fix exactly, carefully, this profile of objects, is the primitive's most keenly sensed design. The impressionist, on the other hand, would remark that this profile is illusory and is something that we do not find in actual vision. If one relies upon what one sees of a tree, in the strictest sense of the word, one will discover that its contour is not clean-cut, that its silhouette is diffuse and imprecise, and that it is distinguished from its environment not by its non-existent profile, but by the massing of interior color-tones. This is why the impressionist does not draw the object; he achieves it by mixing little dabs of color, each of which is formless in itself, but which, all together, through their combination, are capable of engendering for the half-shut eyes the vibrant presence of the object. The impressionist paints a vase or a tree, without anything in his canvas that possesses the outlines of a tree or a vase. Impressionism, then, as a style of painting, consists in denying the external form of things in order to reproduce the internal form, the interior chromatic mass.

European sensitivity was under the sway of this sort of art at the end of the last century. And it is curious to observe how this art harmonizes with the philosophy and the psychology of that date. The philosophers of 1890 maintained that reality is made up simply of sensorial and emotive states. Whereas the naïve individual, as well as the painting primitive, interprets what is called the world as something immovable, located outside of us and endowed with a

magnificent and immutable architecture, the impressionist philosopher believes that the universe is the simple projection of our sensations and our affections, a flux of odors, tastes, lights, sufferings and desires, an incessant procession of restless interior reflections. Similarly, primitive philosophy supposes that our personality consists in an invariable kernel, a sort of spiritual statue that accepts environmental changes with a gesture of permanency. It is the philosophy of Plutarch's man, whom we see plunged into the ocean of enduring life, like the crag, the surge, or the statue of inclemency. But the impressionist psychologist denies what is commonly known as character, which is by way of being the individual's sculptural profile; he beholds in the individual a perpetual mutation, a procession of diffused states, an ever-differing conjunction of emotions, ideas, griefs and hopes.

These considerations serve to date Proust's inner tendencies. The monograph upon one of Swann's amours is an example of psychologic *pointillisme.* For the medieval author of *Tristant and Iseult,* love is a sentiment possessed of a clean-cut profile; for him, a primitive in the psychologic novel, love is love and only love. Proust, on the contrary, describes an amour of Swann's that is absolutely lacking in the outlines of love. There is everything in it: points of glowing sensuality; violet pigments of contempt; the browns of habit; the grays of vital lassitude. One thing alone is lacking: love. Love is here a resultant, as in a tapestry the figure is a result of the intersection of the threads, no one of which has the shape of the figure. Without Proust, we should not have had a literature that asks to be read as one looks at Monet's pictures.

And this is why it is, when one goes to compare him with Stendhal, it is good to take certain precautions. In many ways, the two are antagonistic. Stendhal, above all, is an imaginative: he imagines plots, situations and characters. He never copies: everything with him results in fantasy, a nervous, concentrated fantasy. His beings are, at the same time, *"pensées"* which might be the line of a madonna in Raphael's pictures. Stendhal believes firmly in the reality of his characters, and consequently endeavors to draw their profiles without any ambiguity. The characters in Proust, on the other hand, are lacking in outline; they are, rather, varying atmospheric condensations, spiritual images which are constantly being transformed by breeze and light. Unquestionably, Proust is in the Stendhal tradition, "investigator of the human heart." But where for Stendhal the human heart is a solid, with plastic but rigid lines,

for Proust it is a diffuse and gaseous volume, varying from one moment to another with the meteorologic pressure. Stendhal's drawings and Proust's paintings are separated by a distance analogous to that which separates Ingres from Renoir. Ingres has given us, without equivocation, beautiful women with whom we could fall in love. But Renoir, no; his process excludes that. The living plasm of luminous points which in Renoir is a woman gives us, possibly to a supreme degree, the sensation of the fleshly pulp; but a woman, to be beautiful, has need of imposing upon the expansion of her flesh the correcting limits of a profile. In the same manner, Proust's literary and psychologic method prevents his modeling attractive feminine figures. The Duchess of Guermantes, notwithstanding the predilection that is shown her, impresses us as being ugly and impertinent, and that is all there is to it; where, if we were to live over again the torrid years of our youth, it is certain that we should fall in love with Sanseverina, woman with a face so calm but with a heart so quivering.

In short, Proust brings to literature what might be termed a general atmospheric intention. Landscape and human beings, the external world and the world within, all with him become volatilized in a diffuse and airy fluttering. One might say that Proust's universe is made to be apprehended under the form of respiration, for everything in it is atmosphere. In these volumes, no one does anything, nothing ever happens; what we have is a passive procession of static situations. And it could not be otherwise, since in order to do something, there would first have to be something fixed and determined. The action of the animal develops always as a line that sets out from its will, which breaks in stumbling upon obstacles, to be unceasingly renewed, revealing thus the fact that it is subject to unlooked-for resistances. This broken line, which represents the line of action of the animal, man or beast, is for that reason charged with a latent dynamism which leads to the evolvement of dramatic shocks. But the existence of Proust's characters is of a vegetable nature. For the plant, to live is to be and not to act. Immersed in the atmosphere, the plant is incapable of opposing it; its passivity eliminates all drama. In a similar fashion, Proust's characters, like vegetables, display an inertness amid their atmospheric destiny; and, botanically submissive, their lives appear to have been reduced to a chlorophyllic function, a chemical dialogue that is always the same and, in a manner, an anonymous one, the plant docilely receiving the mandates of the atmospheric environment.

In Proust's books, the true provokers of vital variations are, rather than the characters, the winds, the psychic and moral climes that successively surround those characters. And the biography of each is dominated by certain spiritual trade-winds which, alternately blowing, paralyze the sensitivity. All depends upon which side the squall comes from; and just as there are northwinds and southwinds, so do Proust's character vary, according as the breath of life comes from the Meseglise or the Guermantes side. And one is not to be astonished at the insistence with which this writer speaks of "sides" (*côtés*), seeing that the universe for him is a meterological reality, the indubitable essential being the quarter of the wind.

An ingenious abandonment of the external and conventional form of things thus obliges Proust to define things by means of their internal forms, through the structure of their interior tissues. But this structure is of microscopic character, and this accounts for Proust's abnormal approach and for his poetic histology. His work reminds one of German anatomical treatises, such as: *Über feinere Bau der Retina des Kanninchens,* "on the microscopic structure of the rabbit's retina."

The microscope, whence the minutiae. Minutiae, whence the prolixity. The atmospheric interpretation of human life, and as a consequence, the minuteness with which human life is described, give Proust's books an obvious flaw that is not to be remedied. I refer to a special fatigue which the reading of these volumes induces, even in the most devoted of the author's admirers. If we were dealing with the ordinary weariness which stupid books produce, there would be nothing more to be said. But the fatigue which the Proustian reader encounters has its own very special characteristics, and has nothing whatsoever to do with boredom. It is very rarely that one of his pages is lacking in the necessary intensity. Nevertheless, we are ready, at any moment, to lay the book down. Moreover, throughout the work, we are conscious of being constantly brought up, as if we were not to be permitted to go our own gait, as if the author's rhythm were less agile than our own and were perpetually putting a *ritardando* on our haste.

This is the inconvenience and the advantage of impressionism; in Proust's volumes, as I have said, nothing happens, there is no theatricality, no action. It is a series of views extremely rich in content, but static. But we mortals are by nature dynamic, and only movement interests us.

When Proust tells us that the bell of the garden-gate at Combray

jingles, and that, in the darkness, the voice of Swann, who has just arrived, is to be heard, our attention fastens upon this fact and, recoiling upon itself, prepares to leap forward to another fact which must be going to follow, and for which this is the preparation. We do not inertly ensconce ourselves in the first fact; but once we have been summarily informed of it, we expect to be propelled onward toward another to come; for the reason that, in life, as we believe, each fact is the herald of and the transition to another, and so on, until a trajectory has been formed, in the same way that each mathematical point is followed by another point to form a line. But Proust puts this dynamic impulse of ours to the torture, by obliging us, relentlessly, to stay in the first fact, sometimes for a hundred pages and more. Following Swann's arrival, nothing happens; one point does not follow another; but Swann's coming into the garden, this simple momentary incident, this point of reality, is unprogressively dilated and enlarged, without changing into another, grows in volume, and there are then pages and pages in the course of which we do not stir; we merely see the incident growing elastically, taking on new details and new meanings, growing like a soap-bubble, and, like a soap-bubble, shot with irisations and reflections.

We are thereupon aware of a sort of punishment in the reading of Proust. His art acts upon our dynamism, upon our appetite for action, for movement, for progress, in the manner of a bit that is constantly holding us back; we suffer like the quail which, in leaping about its cage, flounders against the iron wire that marks the confines of its prison. The fact is, Proust's muse might be termed "Moroseness," for his style consists in the literary exploitation of that "*delectatio morosa*" which the Councils so severely punished.

We now perceive, with an excess of clarity, how Proust's cycle of elementary "inventions" is formed. We now see how his modification of customary form and distance is the perfectly natural consequence of his primary attitude toward memory. When we make use of memory as one medium among others for the intellectual reconstruction of reality, we take but the reminiscent fragment that suits our purpose and, without permitting it to grow in accordance with the law of its own being, we go on. In reasoning and in the mere association of ideas, our soul describes a trajectory, goes on from one thing to another, and the attention progresses by means of a series of successive displacements. But if, turning our back upon reality, we dive into the contemplation of memory, we see that

memory proceeds by means of a simple dilatation, without our stirring, so to speak, from the starting-point. To remember is not, like to reason, to travel through mental space; it is the growth of space itself.

I am ignorant of Proust's habits of writing; but his phrases, so sinuous and so complex, would appear, once written, to have undergone internal vicissitudes. One perceives that they have in the beginning, perhaps, been well proportioned; but the memory locked in them has later given rise to new and spontaneous impulsions, to excrescences, as it were, which have led to strange and—to my taste—delightful grammatical nodosities, like those bumps which form on the feet of Chinese women, under the pressure of narrow shoes.

Following these remarks upon the most elementary and abstract dimensions of Proust's work, one should now go on to speak of the work itself and the author's temperament. In doing so, we would discover the most surprising correlations between that a-dynamic tendency, which governs his interpretation of time, distance and of form, and his other peculiarities. For it is curious to ascertain that the same very simple organic principle is sufficient to explain all the facets of Proust's work; for example: his uncommon perspicacity in describing what happens in connection with the circulation of his character's blood; his fine perception of hygrometric changes and of muscular sensations; and finally, his transcendent and all-embracing snobism. But this would call for too many pages, and I have not the right to flood the *Nouvelle Revue Française* with a species of literary criticism which may be of interest only to myself.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Eugenio d'Ors

Eugenio d'Ors, "one of the most civilized minds of our time" as he has been called, was born in 1882, of Cuban and Catalonian origin. He began as a Catalonian writer, and became the leading literary representative of the province. From 1906 on, under the pseudonym of Xenius, he was the equivalent of the American "column-conductor" on the Veu de Catalunya, *the chief newspaper of Barcelona. He played an important part in the intellectual revival of his people, being Superintendent of Public Instruction at the* Mancomunitat *of Barcelona. It was following the War, about 1920,*

that d'Ors began to break away from his Catalonian associations and started writing in Castilian. In this sense, as well as others, he is an after-War Spanish writer. He was recently elected to the Spanish Academy.

Señor d'Ors is an art critic and aesthetician who branches out into the creative field, somewhat in the manner of the late Maurice Barrès. His "La Ben Plantada" *given below is an example, at once, of superior journalism and of the trend of d'Ors' aesthetic. In it, he opposes category to anecdote, order and intellectual serenity to Catalonian and Mediterranean romanticism and turbulence. His "Still-Lifes" and his meditations on Correggio's* "Noli Me Tangere" *likewise stem from his preoccupations with the plastic arts.*

Eugenio d'Ors has a plastic mind, an academic mind in the best sense of the term. The art museum, with him, leads to a European universality. He is possessed of an almost fanatic passion for systematization, for the harmony of ideas and the codification of intellectual laws. He proceeds a little in the manner of the most recent German aestheticians. His career has been a struggle against the baroque, and to him is due the coinage of the term Baroquism, to go with Romanticism. Baroquism, to him, is what Belphégorisme *is to M. Benda. He is opposed to Goya's "When Reason goes to sleep, monsters are begot." This he would call "the Bill of Rights of Monsters." He prefers to remember Goya's "Divine Reason, spare none!" He prefers, above all, the clarity of Cézanne's apples. (It was he who predicted Picasso's classicism, or rather, Italianism.)*

In short, the museum catalogue has, by d'Ors, been carried over to serve as the foundation for an intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual system.

D'Ors has also written ideologic novels, the most charming of which, perhaps, is his Oceanografia del Tedio, *or "Oceanography of Boredom." His style exhibits a verbal preciosity and a Cuban musicality.*

See Cassou's Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 139ff. See also an article,* "Eugenio d'Ors," *by Jorge Guillén in* Hispania *(Institut d'Etudes Hispaniques de l'Université de Paris), Janvier-Mars, 1921.*

La Ben Plantada *was originally written in Catalonian. The translation below is based upon the Castilian version by Marquina.*

PROSE

I

Fragment from "LA BEN PLANTADA"

Of the Appearance and External Circumstances of La Ben Plantada

Beware, my admiration, beware, of falling into lyricism, as I come to speak of La Ben Plantada's aspect. Make no attempt, by means of inexact and witching words, at a facile appeal to a facile suggestibility. No hymns, no transports, no confusions. Define, count, measure. Say as did Stendhal, mad with passion for St. Peter's at Rome, as he began his description: *"Here are precise details."*

Here, then, are precise details. La Ben Plantada is one meter, eighty-five centimeters in height. From the ground to her waist, one meter, twenty-five; and sixty centimeters from waist to head. But this initial and happy lack of proportions is accompanied by the most admirable proportions elsewhere. Thus the foot, not too small, is fine and animated, throughout its length, from heel to tip. The ankles may appear a trifle broad; but for that, there is only the white stocking to blame. When she walks, one is conscious of her rounded, powerful, perfect knees. And the problem of the union of the long ambulatory extremities with the trunk which remains fixed would seem to have been solved by architectural nature, thanks to a secret artifice in the manner of the one which the Renaissance employed in the invention of *"duomos."*

As for the trunk, generous, absolutely Hellenic, it would have been judged excessive in 1909; but it is in accord with the loose, flowing, classical and altogether harmonious styles of 1911. The arms are long; thick at the shoulder, they gradually diminish; without the defect of those of the Russian dancer, Trouhanowa, which are as wide at the elbow as the hand. As for the Ben Plantada's hands, we shall not, certainly, eulogize their aristocracy; for they are broad and rather strong. The bust is replete with dignity, and not free from an appearance of gentle weariness, which likewise goes with this summer's fashions. While waiting hopefully for a maternal abundance to come, this bust is at present given over to the supreme joy of respiration. One might find the head a little small, if it were not for the sumptuous hair, of a dark blond in color and in nowise too striking, and combed with the most methodical care. From the

forehead to the knot at the back, which is very low down, we may estimate a distance of some thirty-five centimeters. But however low that knot may hang, there is still room for a marvelously broad neck, in the center of which there is a slight protuberance, undoubtedly due to the growing girl's bad habit of dropping her head a little.

But here, precise details would fail me, if I were to attempt to describe two things which are impossible of description: her movements and her eyes. And so, for the sake of a strict economy, I shall be content with saying that, if Music presides over la Ben Plantada's movements, then the charm of her eyes must fall under the jurisdiction of Urania, the muse of astronomy.

Fresh revelations concerning la Ben Plantada's eyes.

I admit that, in saying of la Ben Plantada's glance that it is presided over by the muse of astronomy, one has said quite enough; and yet, there is more to be said. I have a singular fear that definition may lend itself to highly erroneous interpretations. One may, indeed, deduce that it has been my intention to compare the admirable damsel's eyes—as has been done so often before!—with stars or celestial luminaries. Nothing of the sort. Rather than any one star, we should have to take as a basis of comparison a whole heaven, and not precisely a physical heaven, as viewed either by day or night, but, to be strict about the matter, *the heavens upon an astronomical map,* such as may be be found in an atlas or other books dealing with the subject.

In this guise, the comparison should no longer be taken as metaphorical, but as optical and relentlessly literal. That pale and shiny lithographer's green; those blue, white or glowing points; the mystery of those parabolas and constructive lines; those little vari-colored but precisely colored zones; and finally, the emotion which is to be discovered there, an emotion at once weird, calm and imposing,—all this is reduced to a certain unity and sum in la Ben Plantada's eyes. Which are vast, humid and full of lucid depths. And over them the eyelids weave a light shadow, like that which, upon other maps, maps of the earth, is cast by the calm network of meridians and parallels.

Inasmuch as her face has the delightful pallor of the moon, it happens that the brightness of her gaze is also compared to that light which the planet Saturn diffuses. But as I have already said, the evocation of a particular star impresses me as being inadequate to our text of the day. A star has a sharp, pointed light, very harsh

and almost shivering. La Ben Plantada's eyes, on the other hand, are expansively gentle and serene, and appear to be stretching themselves, elastically, like a cat, in a lazy, sultry gesture.

My pen, alas, is not equal to describing a miracle so subtly simple as the one I have just unveiled for you. Would, my readers, that la Ben Plantada's eyes might appear to you in a dream tonight. You would understand, then, all that I have told you and am about to tell you of them. And if, the next day, once you were awake, you should undertake to call up and explain those eyes, you would understand how difficult it is to be precise, how grievously impossible it is to communicate to others that light, which was yours for a while, upon those beautiful lids.

II

THREE STILL-LIFES

Roses and Lemons

The hand,—at present invisible, at present distant,—before closing the door without a sound,—but a sound that was audible would have halted it,—has left, as a testament, three flowers in a Talavera vase. Too languid for roses, and too odorous for peonies: three flowers in bloom.

In addition, resting upon the cloth that is wrinkled about them, there are three yellow lemons, concrete, round, determined, each with its twofold nipple: like those compact little villages in the folds of an orographic system.

In the vicinity of these lemons the roses languish. If they are atrophied and enervated to the point of resembling poppies, it means that something has happened: the magic of lemons.

Returning good for evil, drooping within the neck of the vase, they cut and slice, with delicate breath, that tart and astringent odor.

The Turkey-Hen

No, it cannot be real, the atrocious nudity of this mass of plucked fat. Near to attaining the purity of gold the yellow is stylized in the round protuberances. But there is a doubtful rose-hue in the curves, and a dubious blue in the depths.

And there is the skin. A cold skin which yet seems to be cold. Stretching, to the point of breaking, this way and that, its bath-

towel woof. And which rumples, already stiff, in its quadruple-folded joints and in the flaccid wrinkles left by the fatigue of so many hatchings.

And those two wounds. Frightful, amid the feathers, that of the neck, where the blood runs out. And charming, clean, with a few feathers, the one through which the entrails spill.

And the eye. Half-shut, small, round, black, with a little luminous dot that is almost a sign of life, almost a reproach.

Nineteenth-Century Interior

A painter's studio of a half-century ago,—with the secret,—now forgotten,—of little nooks that look so cozy. Like this one, with its garnet-red velvet and its bronze candelabra,—and the reflection, —motionless in intensity,—from a great fire on the hearth.

There are two things that match: the Chinese ivory trinket, and this little pile composed of a pair of long, narrow cream-colored kid gloves, which have here intertwined their weariness at being stretched to the elbow. . . . And the bouquet of sweet-williams, with the violin the color of curdled blood, with the blackness of its holes,—two things more that match.

Two beakers, in which there remains yet, at different altitudes in the glass, a white wine, might be able it would seem to reveal the gallant mystery which has led, at this late hour, to the meeting of gloves, ivory, sweet-williams and violin.

But the mirror, in its storied ebony frame, is very high up, and very dim. All it reflects now is solitude in an emulsion of phantoms.

III

"NOLI ME TANGERE"

"Noli me tangere." . . . Disciple, touch me not. All my mercy is for thee. All my tenderness is for thee. All my doctrine is for thee. All my work, for thee. And I have yet to give thee, if thou followest me, my word, my smile, my glance, my fragrance. But touch me not.

(Here we are once more at the Del Prado Museum, standing in front of the morbid, disquieting composition of Antonio Allegri, known as Correggio; a work thrice holy, in theme, in feeling and in meeting. The Lord, standing, pointing the way to the fallen woman. The Disciple in the presence of the Master. . . .)

". . . Yes, my word, my smile, my glance, my fragrance. . . . I have Heaven to give thee also. Thy past, what does it matter? How could the past be in thee, when, already, there is no longer any past for thee? Thou hast lost it, when thou hast found me. Thou hast lost it, in losing the memory of it. Thy memories begin tomorrow. Here, thou art whiter than the lilies. More child-like than children, fresher than those who have never known a yesterday. They say that you are thirty or forty years of age. Perhaps. But you are born at this moment. Come and follow me; it is like going to meet life. . . . And so, let us start—let us start ahead, I leading, to part the thorns and the undergrowth, with my bleeding hands, thou, following in my footsteps. Thou shalt see how soothing to thy foot is each imprint left by mine. In the hollow of each, you will find a little of my warmth. . . . But touch me not.

(Correggio is admirable in conception, drawing, light, and the hands of his figures. The same for their feet. In this he differs from Perugino; there is a canvas of the latter's hanging today in the Museum at Grenoble, in which, in contrast with a celestial countenance and a noble perfection of body, he gives us a naked foot that is, for no apparent reason, abominably ugly and emaciated. . . . But all thy body shall shine, when thy soul shall have been truly set afire.)

"Thou, Woman, thou dost not know. Thou must know. Thou art drifting. Thou must get thy bearings. Thou art dispersed. Thou must collect thyself. Thou fleest. Thou must keep. . . . Submissive form, dazzled eyes, heaving bosom, bent knees, legs bent under, arms apart, fingers spread out like a fan! And a throat ready for the sacrifice! And the restless disorder of half-open garments. All this I take, as a sculptor takes the clay. I would model thee, creature; I shall make of thee a statue for the glyptothecae of God. Each of my gestures shall be an engraving upon a docile plate. The first step my foot takes should be for you a compass-drawing. There is a flaming call in the pupil of my eye. The diagonal of my two arms shapes an upward path. An index-finger upward gently points the goal. The other finger, dropped, is, it would seem, bidding your weakness lean upon my strength.

(Everything in Correggio is an upward impulsion. There is always in his work, visible or invisible, the eagle snatching up Ganymede—as in the picture in the Museum at Vienna—and an outward glimpse of sky—as in the decorations of the cathedral at Parma.)

"And now, through thee, I call upon all Nature, call it to Re-

demption. In Nature's bosom, thou art, Woman, as thy son one day was in thy belly. Thou art a part of her; she wraps thee, guards thee, suffuses thee. She guards thee while she nourishes thee. Thou canst barely move inside her. All thy flutterings are but the flutterings of Nature. . . . How many landscapes in thine eyes, how many landscapes in thy throat, how many landscapes in thine undone hair, how many landscapes, all too vague and all too pleasing! Plants, waters, clouds, volcanoes are thy brothers and thy sisters; the meteors determine thy secrets. It is exceedingly hard to redeem thyself, Woman. Exceedingly hard to lift thyself to this amorphous beatitude. . . . But the diagonal of my arms is firm. And its firmness, almost geometrical, almost abstract, shall save thee at any price. And it shall save the world, as well, the world that clings to thee, and which, after its fashion, shall follow thee; it shall follow thee, while thou art being saved. And so, touch me not.

(In Correggio, the landscape is likewise feminine. There is something of the maternal in his tenderness. His figures appear to be inert children, suckled on all the sweets of the landscape. The one in the picture in the Del Prado Museum is a joy to the eyes, like a spurt of milk upon a bed of green cress. Caressingly fresh! We may recall Góngora's sonnet addressed "To a Very White Lady Clad in Green," where the water is "whitened with foam" at the passage of a swan, whose down is at once to be swallowed up amid the rushes.)

"I shall bestow upon thy freshness my consistency, O statue of mine! I shall lift thy confusion into light. I shall normalize thine instinct into law. I shall lift thee up to Nature, by way of bringing thee to grace. Thou art a sinner; I shall make of thee a penitent. Thou art Eve; I shall make of thee a Madonna. Thou art a goad; I shall make of thee a rein. Thou art war; I shall make thee peace. Thou art entrails; I shall make thee Angel. But touch me not.

"Touch me not, for thou art yet defiled."

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Gabriel Miró

Gabriel Miró, born in Alicante, in 1879, may be looked upon as Azorín's successor. Both writers come from that portion of Spain known as the Levant. Aside from his Figuras de la Passion de Nuestro Señor, *which stands in the same relation to his other work as*

Flaubert's Salammbô *does to* Madame Bovary, L'Education sentimentale, *etc., Miró's output is marked by a certain steady abundance which is like that of Nature herself. He is a hermit intoxicated with the sensual. The author of savory novels, dealing with Spanish provincial and clerical life* (El Padre San Daniel, El Obispo Leproso, *etc.), he is both poet and novelist; and his occasional cruelty of analysis and observation is balanced by an almost Franciscan tenderness of feeling. His works tend to breed a sense of sadness and even of fatigue in the reader. This sadness is to be seen, especially, in* El Humido dormido *and* Niño y grande. *Cassou:* Panorama de la littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 146ff.*

The following excerpt is from El Humido dormido, *or "Sleeping Smoke."*

THE MAN IN MOURNING AND THE SPRIG OF PARSLEY

The plain so smooth, so silent, allowed the whistle of the train to stretch over it and reach us very clear; then came the metallic commotion of the bridge.

On Saturdays, as we sat at our desks in the study-room, we could picture to ourselves that train from Alicante, merely by lending ear. We knew it whistled as a personal warning to us, just before rushing headlong at the river. The commotion died out; and the poor bridge settled down to a sullen and empty night, while the express panted happily because it had brought us our father.

Being unable to glance at each other—we were not allowed to look behind us—my brother would cough, which in our secret language meant, "He's coming!" And I would cough back, "I know." —Soon afterwards Brother Door-keeper would come and summon us.

From the stairs of bare granite we could hear father's quiet steps; he preferred to wait for us in the cloister, because this meant that he would kiss us a moment sooner.

Those evening calls were very brief; yet they are the ones that stand out most vividly. We have a picture of ourselves acting very filial-like; touching and smelling the clothes that were still permeated with the atmosphere of home and the scent of mother's hands among the fresh odors of the road. We explored his gloves, his

stick, the inside of his hat. We gazed at him as he stood beneath a claustral arch, against the immobile trees of the closed garden and the stars.

According to Rules and Regulations, visits took place on Sundays only; but on Sundays there were such a concourse of tumultuous families; such a show of elegance on the part of youthful mothers and grown-up girls; such a fusillade of greetings; such a gathering and breaking up of chattering groups; such demonstrations of gratitude for Father Prefect's ceremonious parties; not to mention the feeling of being under observation in the public parlor nor the sensation of Monday being just around the corner and a whole rigid week ahead of us, that it all ended by spoiling the taste of those blissful hours.

Afterwards, in order to escape from dry routine, we would steal out of the room and run all over cloisters, patios, corridors, halls and orchards. At times, some of the families would get together while we, the kids, kept on going and plunged into the academic solitude, hoping for dangers. Our excitement was the greater for seeking the world and adventure within our own building, which for us was a mansion full of zones where its very dwellers might at any time find both mystery and enchantment; and though every nook of it had grown familiar through our having played or walked in it, our being there at that time, so few in number, alone and unprotected, proved likewise an incentive to emotion.

One Sunday morning, when we got to the school's bakehouse, which stood in a corner of the orchard, we felt that we were very far, in some country barn. There was a smell of wood, of peasant bread, of agricultural rest. The ground cracked; and I thought, "A tramp, maybe."

It proved to be a tall man, all in mourning; he stopped captiously, and as he stood there, towering above our whole Sunday, he looked like the figure in an ancient portrait of some unlucky caballero. Very pale, of a frigid, macerated, inner pallor, as though it were protected by glass, the glass of that ancient picture. I do not know today, and perhaps I did not know then, what his eyes looked like, nor his mouth, nose or hands, because he was completely seen under the transparency of a monstrance glass, as if all kinds of bright things were bewitched inside, growing larger, turning into a livid pulp, getting watery over the bones. . . . The man in mourning turned around as he felt us near, like those ferocious sorcerers in the fairy stories who scent the poor hidden creature's "smell of

human flesh." Those among us who had already got at Homer, were reminded of Polyphemus. But our Polyphemus was a lanky cyclops, with two staring eyes and a pallor that seemed to ooze out of an urn. We fled pell-mell; and the monster in black ran after us. . . .

A week went by; and Sunday came as usual. We were tired as we left the study-room; but that morning we sought at once the man in the bake-house. Heedless of relatives' calls, we vanished among the stacks of firewood. Steps drew near; and one of our chums cried in a faltering voice, "Here comes the man we're afraid of!" No sooner had he said this, we realized that we were afraid; and we ran; the black phantom attempted to stop us; we ran all the faster; carrying away with us his stare and his grin as though they clung to us. We were oppressed, we were haunted by the memory of it all, which was as consuming as sin itself. In our study-room we could hear him draw near, and could not help look behind us—even though we had to be punished for it and kneel and kneel—knowing all the time that it was not "he." The "big" boy who was entrusted with the task of reading the evening prayers in the oratory —his name was Nicholas and he had great powers of endurance—would recite in a loud but penitent voice those epiphonemas out of the *Anchor of Salvation:* "I must die and know not how; I shall be judged by God and know not when. Were it tonight, what account should I give? What sentence would be passed upon me?" . . . And we would close our eyes and meditate and answer the query within ourselves and peer furtively into the depths of the chapel where the pallid gentleman's specter seemed to loom, the color of old wax, looking as though he were inside a tall, invisible lantern. Afterwards, in our dormitory, we would be attacked by hallucinations, and when we recognized the groans of a particular chum of ours, crying out in torment, our blood would thunder, and we would shudder out of fear of his fear. . . .

Harbinger of many a delight, the train's whistle throbbed like a joyous hymn over the plain. My brother coughed twice to convey this news to me, "Father *and* mother are coming!" I coughed twice, "I know, I know." Others coughed in the room, congratulating us, the master lost his temper. And, in the morning, my parents asked the school authorities to allow those numerous boarders for whom a train never came from home, to join us during our visit. Our crowd was very large and festive. Brother Door-keeper was beside himself worrying about his responsibility. All the severity in his

eyes could not restrain us from exploring the isolated nooks in the school.

We, the veterans, told the new adventurers about the discolored gentleman's apparition, warning them against fear, while rejoicing all the time in secret; and when we drew near the bake-house we realized that being more numerous now, the orbit of fear would grow accordingly, and thought with regret that our phantom might not be there. But the phantom was there. His convulsed and angular shadow issued forth from among the woodpiles. Our flight was as noisy as a crowd in a panic. All the families came running; and a gentleman from Caceres, who was the uncle of one of the boys, was heard saying:

"Why, I know that man! He's a landowner back home!"

All the redoubtable marvels and the very ghost itself now seemed to be transferred to and become incarnate in the good man from Caceres. We gathered round him, eyeing him avidly, almost rancorously, and standing next to us was the gentleman of the sinister pallor. Together and in the best of terms we walked back to the cloisters. The man from Caceres was asking him questions about his oil and cereal business and his trips; finally he asked him, didn't we have a son? For many of those gentlemen from Caceres and the rest of the provinces, with placid hearts and efficient brains when trifling memories are concerned, must push the cereals and the oils aside in order to see another man's children. The man in mourning smiled with dry, convulsive lips and said yes, h*e had* had a son; a son so white he was painful to behold, he looked as though he were going to break out of sheer brittleness. Everybody used to say, "Children have got to suffer when they're predestined to become great men. . . . Yours is a predestined one!" When she died, the mother said to her husband, "That son, that son of ours; you'll be left all alone with him. . . ." He was left all alone with him; he would feed him; put him to sleep; comb his hair. He had to comb his hair very slowly; his hair was a mass of blonde curls that seemed to be sculptured upon his large marmorean brow. One day he pulled out a sprig of young parsley. The father tried to take it from him; the child threw it away, and his father insisted, "Give me that plant; I'll show you the leaves that'll never grow on account of what you've done."—"I won't, I won't." "Then," said the man in mourning, "I hit him. I hit his little hands. . . ."

The gentleman from Caceres stared at all of us and praised that kind of education and told us about the tree that must be mended

while it is tender and said that vicious habits have a way of beginning with a few leaves of parsley and of finishing with a whole estate.

The pallid man kept on talking about his son . . .

One night, his blonde curls got all wet and parted with the sweat from his brow; his marble forehead was set on fire; the ceiling oppressed him as though it were sitting on his lungs; his lips turned purple . . ."I gave up the mills, the olive groves, the whole business. . . ." And he looked at the gentleman from Caceres. "With a piece of canvas such as boat sails are made of, I made a tent to protect the sick baby's cradle; me with him all the time; the two of us, out in the fields, night and day. A peasant woman cooked our food on a bonfire. We had an old lantern, and pigeons would come flying to the light, and with them tramps, shepherds, mastiffs. . . . The child Jesus lay like that—no doubt. We would tell stories, count the stars, listen to the bells as the steeples told off the hours, listen to the cocks. . . . My son died at dawn, on Easter Sunday. The frozen whiteness of his skin remained forever in my flesh. He never would grow tired of feeling my cheeks, my eyelids, my whiskers. Just before he breathed his last, he said to me, ''Member when I would not pick up the parsley?' And once more back to business, to trips."

His friend praised the virtue of activity; he placed great faith in its fruits of consolation.

"This year I am bringing flour to this school."

"How much flour is consumed here?" interrupted the gentleman from Caceres.

The man in mourning told him; and added that every time he came, he would spend the morning in the bake-house. At first, he thought that he would go to the parlor to watch us, but the sight of so many happy families was more than he could bear. So, when we took to frequenting the out-houses, and Brother Buyer wanted to prevent us, he pleaded with him to let us be. . . .

The man from Caceres could not restrain himself:

"Brother Buyer is a good man from Aragon. I think he used to work for a relative of mine. Isn't his name Espi, Brother Espi?"

But we all said no.

And the man in mourning went on:

" . . . I begged him to leave you kids alone, so that I might see you and talk with you; but you would run away from me as if I were the wolf. . . ."

. . . Here that man sinks into the thick of the sleeping smoke.

For we never went back to the bake-house. Why should we? We were no longer afraid. . . .

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Ramón Gómez de la Serna

Ramón Gómez de la Serna is an outstanding figure in the writing Spain of today. Born in 1891, his first book bore the title Entrando en fuego *(1904). He has since broken practically all records by publishing more than sixty volumes. He has written plays and prefaces,—prefaces for Apollinaire, Lautréamont, Wilde, Colette, etc., etc. His prefaces alone constitute a respectable body of critical work. He travels occasionally, and lived for a number of years in Portugal and at Naples; but outside of that, the Puerta del Sol at Madrid is, as Señor Caballero has observed, "the navel of the world" for Ramón. The Puerta del Sol and the café Pombo. Madrid owes much of her charm to Ramón, who goes about transforming her streets into magic and miracle. Ramón has written two big Bible-like tomes on his favorite café, alone.*

Ramón (for it is as Ramón that he is affectionately known to the world) represents that modern spirit of play in literature, a play often and closely approaching fumisterie, *of which something has been said in the General Introduction to this work. He also may be taken as standing for the cult of the momentary. Endowed with a Whitmanesque vitality, he reminds one of such writers as Giraudoux or Max Jacob in France, while other writers, such as Orio Vergani in Italy, owe much to him. With Ramón, Spanish literature takes an instinctive and illogical leap forward.* Fantaisiste, *fetichist, mysticist, Ramón's reactions are always unexpected and unpredictable. He is immersed in a constant drama between himself and the world. He has been compared to Rimbaud. The latter found sacred the disorder of his own soul; Ramón finds sacred the disorder of the world.*

His output is huge, monstrous, and there is no question in it of artistic perfection. But there is magic in it. M. Cassou compares Ramón to Hans Christian Andersen. The former is like Andersen in his divine sympathy for things, objects. But whereas Andersen's world has the flavor of a Paradise Lost, *Ramón's world is a young, a rejuvenated one. The sage of the Pombo is the prophet of future mythologies, the prophet of the impossible, of an imminent Realm*

of Incongruities. He is in love with a sort of sacred idiocy, and his impetuous temperament saves him from melancholy or despair. He is saved, too, by the fact that he spends his life amid the joys of the concrete, which he loves with a sensuous love, as exemplified in his La Villa de Palmyre. *He concludes his* El Novelista, *which is his "novel of novels," with this sentence:*

"It is necessary to utter all the phrases, to dream all the dreams, to note all the realities; one must run as often as possible around the map of this futile old world, a world doomed to go up in a puff of smoke."

See Cassou: Panorama de la Littérature espagnole contemporaine, *pp. 149ff.*

THE MADMAN OF THE VILLAGES

The madness of the madmen in Castile is the dryest and most crushing of all, it is real village madness, that is why I choose those particular madmen, and among all the villages in Castile, why I choose Valle as the most typical, although I shall never forget the screams of Segovia's madmen, who howled desperately in the night, yonder in the abyss above which towers Segovia, yonder in the fearful avenues, like voices from the river, like the real obscure clamors of the river Clamores.

I

Valle is a village in the center of Castile's wilderness, where Castile's dramatic mediocrity is most obviously displayed, where Castile is most Castilian, without any unexpected touch, without an oasis nor an attenuation. In Valle what is most common in Castile—her meaning, her essence, her skull—is shown bare and supine, without ostentation or prosopopoeia. In Valle Castile is caught red-handed, neat and clean.

As a village Valle is compact and compressed; it is adobe-built. It boasts none of those stones of great antiquity which feed the vanity and imagination of other villages. It does not even boast that evocative central building "that was burnt down." Valle is monotonous, precarious, in suspense, and its ground alone is ancient—dust of the dead—dry and smooth, totally devoid of curves, of softness,

of grace, of any aphrodisiac whatsoever. Valle is the wife to whom its natives are wedded, the wife whom one has finally grown used to, and nothing else, the wife who secretes within herself the irretrievable past, the *snapshots* of every day, and all the trivialities and all the shames of a stupid and narrow life. Valle does not endear itself to the heart, neither does it know or alleviate the distress of the heart oppressed by longings for beauty, caprice and passion. It is silent, tyrannical, systematically jealous, though jealous of no one in particular, sober in every way, and its only grace is that of being the foremost among the burgs that have weakened, attacked and lapidated man's extraordinary initiatives.

Valle is impassible and exposed to the sky and to the land that sun and engulf it. The emotion of the landscape is made more leathery and more irritated still by its adobes. The adobe is of a fulminating conceit, and although it seems inconsistent, it is really of an overwhelming consistency. In stone there are richness, power, race and aristocracy; in brick there are color and sufficient industry, and in white or colored plaster there is a festive and eager gracefulness whereby man overcomes the unmovable earth; but in adobe there is nothing, save the sordidness of the arid, ugly and wretched dirt, and the result is that living under adobes is tantamount to living under the dirt that exhibits itself in the adobes—a crude, insidious and absorbing show. The aspect of adobes accentuates the idea of the dirt, weighing upon the soul and making it more rugged, more tenacious and thicker, making it more adobe-like, making it more subterranean, sinking and smothering it with a neutral, disengaged, infinite element, deprived of idolatries and of exquisite levities, of arbitrary flowers, of trifles; dirt of a more terreous, of a sadder and more bilious color. O grave and deep jaundice! . . .

So in Valle, although Valle's code of morals is the absurd one that obtains throughout the whole of Spain, life is less bearable than anywhere else, because its dwellers are deprived of the saving grace of an amorous landscape which touches even those who live within crass and painful morals.

In Castile man's free and rebellious sense of life is locked up within his soul, is held there and finds no outlet, no pleasure and no expression.

In Valle the river is waterless and the four poplars that grow along its banks are a mere suggestion of woods, something like a dream that suggests that it were better if no trees grew there at all. Neither are the springs that liberal gift of the earth, that inex-

haustible proof of her maternity which gushes forth bubbling and before which, relying upon what it has already given of itself and upon what it will still give, one thinks of a fecund subterranean sea. The springs, in Valle, are superficial wells with visible bottoms that look as if they would run dry as soon as those tiny burros that are drawing near have been loaded with six full jars each. Gloomy springs, painful springs, sad cisterns, water almost undrinkable which is not liberal nor colorful nor gracious. . . .

In Valle summer is infernally hot and winter correspondingly rigorous, with a desolate, wretched, stubborn, boring coldness, with less amusements than ever, that keeps the village as isolated as a lighthouse within a continuous, thick and compact frost. O brilliant, transparent, tormenting and vacuous light-house!

In Valle, in summer as in winter, the days have all an identical character, and in midday only is there a moment when life takes on a little strength. At midday there is a moment of passion in the population, the sense of living becomes intense and firm, but the next instant, as soon as they have sat themselves before the dinner table, they are already convinced that the thing that had been suggested within them in that moment of impatience and of perspicacity, shall not come after all; and full once more of their gross humanity, they sink once more into their material and moral solitariness.

In Valle there are but three consolations: one rose in the springtime, the dovecots and bread.

One rose, for in those Castilian roses and in them alone, with their candid, coagulated and smooth perfume, Spring's venereous depth, its joyful bowels, may be smelt. No rose with a perfume so affecting, so splendid, so full, with flesh so abundant as that rose when smelt of a vernal morn. . . . O most dulcet orphan rose! . . . It was the spring's sole reward when a restlessness, a gaiety devoid of purpose and of gratification, awakened a wish to cry out, to fly away, to yield to an incongruous and frenzied delirium. It was impossible to reconcile such a violent and unbalanced springtime with the insipidity of the rest of the year, and one was torn to pieces by a grateful and radiant pain, a hilarity that wheeled over the empty fields and was frightening. All stared at each other and felt their own sensuality tense, suffocating, with no destination whatever. Only the rose!

The dovecots, for they are Poetry's only monument there, as well as the only sympathetic and benign oratory. They are like round

castlets, built of adobes, but topped with a bright, radiant, optimistic, whitewashed crown. In the fields they stand like so many reductions of an ideal, of an exalted presence among the vast pusillanimity, among the sterile perdition of the atmosphere, and although their doves are not white, but mostly of that spiritual grey of Castile, they impart none the less great consolation to the prospect.

And the pure bread in which concurs all the tenderness of the painstaking, incommunicative and untractable earth. Bread is the great sensuality of Castile, her frankness, her sole predilection. Bread is like a soft and exquisite female breast—white and burnt, like a mature breast—and it is tasted and handled with an eager expectation. It is kneaded and baked and its deliciousness and shades of coloring are achieved with a sacred solicitude which is solely fed by that illusion, that short-lived fondness for the sake of which labor was endured a whole year long. Only in Castile—and this is truth indeed—is eaten bread so dense, so pulchritudinous, so fat and so honest.

II

Spain ignores herself. Therefore no symbols are possible and Don Quixote represents no one. Spain's madness is not a romantic and definite one. It is some other kind of madness, less Oriental and more vague, in the midst of a frenzied neutrality. It is the sordid and inconsiderate madness of one deprived of voluptuousness, of that necessary voluptuousness which, when not rightly assumed, nobly assumed, culminates in a shriveling and a routing of the soul.

In Valle this harsh truth shines under a glaring light. In Valle the wings of one's gaze are clipped before the cenereous Castilian waste, and out of that wingless gaze wherein the very wings of life are clipped, comes forth that thing: the madness of Castile. Everything there tends to give back to man his impractical and anxious soul. Woman herself lacks in soft and voluptuous charity. She is untouched by spiritual grace and shorn of color, voluptuousness and aroma. Her flesh is dry, her flesh merely bears or does not bear grain, and no other kind of sweet, diversified, refreshing or beautiful produce. Everything is dried up by the selfish, bachelor-like, yet matrimonial atmosphere. Everyone, while still above the ground, is buried beneath it, buried by it and by a sky which, instead of being fluid, is hard and breaks upon man like a wave, by gusts transparent and subtle, but continuous, a sky which looks like a waste of bluish sand, without any watery quality whatsoever, without airiness, cruel,

lofty with hypocrisy, but overwhelming when its heavy torrents, its heavy unexpected downpours beat down man and subjugate him more to himself, his village, his solitude and his austere and thrifty mode of living, the sky acting thus because after all it is but a commentary of what man himself has wished for and achieved socially. In such a sky the clouds alone are indocile, to the common rule and represent levity, although, since everything else will turn sour in those spacious lands, they are like naked women who tantalize man, only to run away from him.

Every man there is the son of palsied parents, whose palsy he inherits. Every face there gets set, especially during the sunny season, when the huddled plain is filled beneath a glaring sun with a lethal, flinty, unbearable lucidity which dazes and terrifies man, causing him to frown and scowl in an indelible manner, leaving his eyes astonished, dry, deep and sunk.

Thus, in Castile, the incommodity of the soul does not turn into melancholy nor into gaiety, when laughter or tears alone might help weather such a crisis. In Castile there are but inordinate ecstasies, painful attention, dry obduracy, stubborn make-believe, absurd firmness, a malady similar to gall-stones—"earth-stones"—insoluble earth within man's bladder, earth which lacerates man with its dull, everyday, massive pain, the kind of pain that kills not, the kind of pain with which one may live for a hundred years.

In the hyperborean North man, subjected to the same unnatural morals, distils his fears somewhat and loosens his instincts in the landscape and in the gentleness of his womenfolk, just as beneath his sunshine, the Andalusian segregates his melancholy within his sensuality, his levity, his placid reminiscences, his sinful languors, somewhat Oriental, in spite of all.

Your Castilians, however, who are possessed of a coarse appetite, and yet are caught as in a whirlpool in their own rigorous and sterile customs, balance themselves perpetually on the edge of madness, of a kind of madness which does not burst out in most of them thanks to the stiffness of their mettle and of their phlegm which are spent in straining to keep off, with supreme vigilance, the unbridled madness, the most elemental of all, which throbs and swells within them, the madness of instincts oppressed by an atrocious ideal, by a visual and carnal abstemiousness. O conflict in suspense, neuralgia of the whole being, which they bear under all their life, gravely holding down the natural and legitimate incontinence of life!

Still, how numerous the half-madnesses that lurk within that

strong dissimulation! . . . The half-madness of parsimonious avarice, the half-madness of immobility in the monkish arm-chairs, the half-madness of living nothing but a dining-room existence, leaving the house but seldom and never thinking, full of the dining-room and its stagnation, obsessed by the sarcophagus-like clock; the half-madness of card and domino games; the half-madness of a unique and assiduous gesture; and other excessive but pertinacious half-madnesses.

III

In Valle, however, escaping the compulsory equilibrium of all, the urban and smothered madness of all, the accepted and socialized aberration, there are a few revealing madnesses. In these, the unknown, curbed and tacit madness of the others takes its revenge, since madness is a rebellion, despite the identical exterior morals of him who suffers, despite the rabid authority of the austere and scabby customs which rule the village. This is the unexpected, peremptory rebellion, divorced from the very tyrant who suffers from it and would choke it down, with the result that it is he who at last is choked down and reduced to silence. It is the undressing in public of the virtuous, prudish and modest virgin.

This madness which from time to time may undo some poor soft and blind head overwhelmed at last by the unbearable glare of the surrounding scenery, is a thin, prodigious, dull, incongruous, rude madness, an ordinary form of madness, a brown and adobe-like madness, a vast but fanciless madness, a madness more overwhelming than any other, a plain madness devoid of genius, of "decadentism," of satisfaction, of color, a grim madness in which all the mud of which man is made ferments formidably and cracks open beneath the irresistible pressure.

No romance whatsoever in Valle, except perhaps the romance of its madmen. These are the great figures of stationary Castile, now that Castile is shorn of the great bubbling-over of faith, of power, of superstition, of adventure whereby her sons used artificially to cure themselves and to compensate for that exacting need for strong and positive acquisitions, for freedom, for sexual sincerity and varietism, which is common to men the world over. Valle teems with fear of its own madmen because they interpret perhaps the irreducible malady of the village. Nevertheless they are spoken of in low tones and, at times, for the sake of rambling, of covering up the

tracks, of freeing oneself from the feeling of being stigmatized with the same stigma, their love story is added to their madness.

IV

Although she was not mad, I remember first of all Sotera's idiotized face, because idiocy also is representative of Castile's spiritual stock-in-trade which is as adequately depicted in Velazquez's squint-eyed and long-snouted Idiot of Soria, as in our contemporaneous Sotera. This idiocy, which abounds likewise in the village, is abortive madness.

Oh, the face of the good Sotera! It looks as though it were continually being attacked by a dazzling glare, stupefied by the aggressive land, with its irresolute and toasted eyes and set mouth! Poor grotesque old woman with an old man's face! She was rich on her own, yet she was dressed as by charity by the relatives who enjoyed her fortune. Her face was dazzling, so full was it of truth. It was plain that she was overcome by the inner conflict of the village, full of its silent headache, drained of her substance, convincing, exemplary in the midst of her idiocy. . . . Unforgettable head of stone!

V

The most astonishing madwoman is the bedridden one. She has kept to her bed for fifteen years, from one day to the next, yonder in the rear of the big house in the plaza of Valle. No one ever calls on her, except her own relatives. Still, some woman who saw her once used to say that she remembered everybody and showed an interest in everybody's loves and children. . . . Oh, aggrandizement of the village, mystery of the absurd law of averages, secured through that voluntary reclusion! A wise woman's game, a deceitful game, a game destined to aggrandize the village. . . . Oh, remote queen, overthrown and full of genius!

We did not know the exact location of that overturned alcove, and were made anxious thereby. . . . Which balcony might be hers? Perhaps her bed-room gave on the back of the patio. . . . At times, perhaps, watchfully, jumping out of bed, she comes up to the cracks in the *visillos* and, seeing the same old frightening plaza, she retreats fearfully before that crudity of life despoiled of pleasure and the crude and exacting light, and jumps back into bed, covering her face. . . .

That madwoman surrounded herself with mystery. One thought of her in her bed-room, softened, afflicted, made compassionate by her madness—a bed-room half-cabinet and half-sitting-room, filled with a lazy, weak, thin and unpleasant light, a light without leaven, without salt and without vibration.—Everything in her room must have become gradually impregnated with her personality, with her powerful *sesame*—the small oval picture, the chairs, the chest of drawers and, of course, the bluish mirror—one could see her reclining in her canopied bed, ample, very well kept, very smooth, deep, very soft too, very much ripened by a long, long usage. She also, pathetically ripened like all bed-ridden women, she would have turned white, white, with silvery hair, very pure, the white hair of a madwoman or of a woman who had suffered much, with hallucinating hair, yet respectable in her madness. One felt that she was so quiet and so prostate, like all who take to their beds out of sheer despair and still go on living to excess, more so than any sane person, for sane persons die sooner than they; her every gesture must have been full of a grave serenity, as though she were always in a state of pure trance, with her head tilted back among her many pillows—one of them square and with numerous flounces—her eyes revulsed, her arms covered by the ample sleeves of her *matinée* and extended with great peace and solemnity upon the long white bed-cover.

The whole village was penetrated with the idea and almost with the significance of that madness which prolonged and fixed before all the wish of the timid, tired and discreet common mind which sincerely would have loved a rest, a resignation and an attitude such as. . . . Oh, fascinating laziness before the impossibility of living!

At times also a question was suggested within us: was she mad or sound, so sound as to have taken once for all this attitude midway between the impotence and the hybridity to which life has been submitted by the cults and the customs enforced for twenty centuries? . . . Might she not have summed up her criterion by such a decision, as a kind of suicide less impetuous, a suicide that would evade the horror of self-destruction?

The great plaza itself was filled with her madness, as though the spirit of her madness, the renunciation of her madness, were bedridden there, grown pale, grey and discouraged, she, the bed and the sky and the bored canopy.

VI

"Theophilus has gone mad," I remember I was told upon returning from a trip. Then I thought of what Theophilus was like *before,* of what I had never looked for in Theophilus; because Theophilus had become a person who intimidated us like a Minister of State in his office and golden chair. Theophilus—it dawned on me then—even when he still was a somewhat scholarly youth, was possessed of a busy violence and, when deep in thought, had a curious stare, as if he were displeased with the triviality of the matter under consideration, and this gave a second perspective to his ideas and to his joys. He was always farther away than the place where he sat. There was something very stiff in him, which we had taken for brusqueness. His gestures had a decided hardness. His hands and legs moved as though they were holding back a formidable force which roared within them. With it all, we realized that seeing himself with no future more remarkable than madness, he should have gone mad.

His mother, poor doña Theodosia, a widow, suffered the madman in the rear of her house, full of shadows, neat and well kept, thanks to her attentive ministrations. But one afternoon he threatened her with death and, had he not been overpowered, he would actually have killed her. The poor mother wept because her son had to be removed to an asylum for the insane.

VII

Theopista was beautiful, but she was disfigured by her madness which imparted none the less a piquant interest to her good looks.

People had spread an exaggerated legend of her beauty, and in such a village where all faces are homely and chameleonlike, she stood out extraordinarily.

Madness began by prompting her to whistle like a man and to speak in a masculine voice. Then she took to throwing everything she could lay hands on. Then a ferocious hatred for men awoke in her and she refused to see her own father and to leave the big corral in her house, the back-door of which she was continually trying to open, fascinated as she was by that groundless suspicion that back-doors give access to the rear of the world, to freedom, to the road to free and discreet adventure.

Likewise in Theopista's eyes there were that phlegm, that obses-

sion, that melted blackness, that blindness, that repressed horror which are seen in the eyes of all the other dwellers of the village, dilated and sunk by dint of staring continually at the same thing: the earth, the earth-colored houses, the earth-colored people whose faces are like earth.

Theopista's madness degenerated gradually and became frenzied, degenerated into rabidness. She appeared full of a passion somewhat admirable in certain ways. Until one day she had to be taken to a remote sanitarium. This event excited and worried the village in secret, and one could feel for a time all the concentrated and austere sorrow of Valle, all the surprise of a latent madman who sees another madman being taken away, which for him is something like a penetrating wound inflicting an unknown pain.

Theopista remained shut up within that disturbing sanitarium, away in France, until one day, deciding that she was cured, they gave her back to the village which greeted her with joy, as though they were giving back the stolen image of a saint. Everyone went to hear her talk, and she talked clearly, recognizing everything and assuming once more her lady-like amiability as a munificent señorita. But soon afterwards she had a relapse, and the rupture came directly from the town, from the disproportion and the unyielding lonesomeness of the landscape and of the customs. She would recover her sanity in yonder murmuring, wooing, insinuating, vaporous French landscape and in yonder dainty and cocottishly luxurious cosmopolitan hotel life of the wealthy madmen. She persisted in her outbursts, and then she was told of Carmen, the chambermaid whom she recalled continually and of whom she spoke with great fondness. She was told that Carmen would come to see her soon.

And Carmen came at once, for everything had been arranged for beforehand. She arrived in a motor car, fattish, genial and somewhat cynical, together with Louise, another chambermaid, who was sullen, thin and tall, and, pretending that they were taking her out for a ride along the high-road, they carried her away rapidly to her distant destination, dressed in a house costume and with her last ideas, for undoubtedly she hoped that she would end her days in the village.

VIII

Don Severiano was a distinguished man with a terreous and toasted youthfulness. He was in his early thirties. His eyes had always had an inner shadow, as if his glance had withdrawn into them, digging

a small cavern as it went back. Although he had never gone out of his dry village, his seemed to be a sailor's eyes, always in the look-out of his ship, like an alert captain. He never failed to look high and far, towards the high seas. He always seemed to be thinking of something more transcending than what he was being told about, perhaps of a boat that would appear, or of a cloud, or of a "puncture" at the edge of the peaceful sea. His close friends called him Severe. He was tall and spare. He used to chew on his mustache slowly and reflectively, while gazing at the horizon, beyond the midget town, beyond the roads, even when he was confronted by a windowless wall. His wrinkled brow looked like a sheet of lined paper upon which his ideas would be scribbled very soon. His thin and yellowed hands were smooth and terse, and suggested a concentrated feeling full of an unquenchable thirst for voluptuousness. He had transparent whiskers, half-blonde, half-lion-russet. Everyone remembered all those noble features of his figure in such a manner that, mad as he was, he was greatly respected and shown great courtesy for the sake of his past.

He was the village notable. Scion of a wealthy family, he had insisted upon remaining in the village out of gratitude for his ancestors. He was the only one there who, although a son of untidy fathers who wore soft shirts and no neck-ties, perpetuated elegance in the village and maintained the tradition of the starched shirt, of the winged collar, of the silk cravat and of the cylindrical cuffs held by short-necked cuff-links. He was a lawyer, which exalted him, and he always pictured himself wrapped up in the prestige of his solemn toga, converted into a surprising and dramatic houppelande. He was often met with as he returned from some hunting expedition—those Castilian hunting expeditions which are a vain and hopeless undertaking—and he was startling with his comprehensive and watchful face, like a sword planted in the midst of the plain, fatally crucified there, unable to go yonder, to that point towards which his eyes were forever gazing. Why, if not because he was fatally rooted there, because he was crucified on the plain, did he not go far away, since he was so rich?

Severe, who was greatly beloved of his parents because he was the only son of theirs who had not gone away "to live their own life," was treated like a spoilt child when he went mad. His father put him in the care of two servants—one for the day and the other for the night. His mother devoted all her time to him, taking care of him as though he were an ailing infant who, though he may be still

up and around, is by no means in good health.—The large mansion of the village was converted into a hospital, and the messengers who heretofore used to cross the gay and brilliant gate which mocked the modern and pleasing luxury of lords and kings, now delivered their messages on the threshold, shrinking from listening to the incurable shrieks of the madman or to his stampeding about like an untamable goat. One fancied him in his madness gowned in the black toga with velvet facings of the deepest black and with his lawyer's cap upon his head, full of that incomparable gentlemanliness of his, with hands much too lively, like two restless and angry spiders climbing up and down the soft black velvet on his chest.

His madness was deliberate and quotidian—how, after he had slept, could he arise insane once more every morning?—and it held but one danger: his thwarted anxiety to kill himself. Every measure was taken to avoid this. There was no weapon of any description in the house, and all the other possible dangers were forewarned. The well itself had been covered up with a large and weighty millstone.

He already seemed settled in his madness when one night he disappeared. How could this be? The servant had fallen asleep for one moment only, that brief nodding which prison watchmen themselves are unable to repress. And where had he hidden? . . . They looked for him all over the house, even in the great wine casks, even in the oven, everywhere, examining all the things that looked untouched, and among which the well, which was hermetically closed by the big slab. They made inquiries in the village. The servants rode out on horse-back, followed by the perspicacious hounds, to investigate among the neighboring villages and to scrutinize the fields. They imagined him running wildly, falling, hurting himself occasionally and bleeding, over the lonesome fields. But as they returned at dusk they brought no news. Thereupon, like one who stands once more in the very center of all probabilities and makes his own choice, the father stood and searched again throughout the house and looked carefully where he had carefully looked before (and so that nothing be left unexplored, it occurred to him to move the slab off the well and look inside) . . .

Oh, oh, oh! There he was, floating within the length of the tube, like a foetus within an alcohol jar. He was taken out at once, and he came over the curb-stone as limp as a rag-doll. Everyone was terrified by the smile that recomposed and fed his catastrophe. The scene was clear: with a smile he had moved the slab, with a smile

he had leant over the squinting and tremendous abyss which was stabbed by a remote light, with a smile he had smelt the water which he coveted in his thirst for everything, the deep water of those Castilian wells, in which the bucket rope is so long, endless almost; with a smile he had got inside like an acrobat; with a smile he had found, toad-like, a footing on the wall of the well, and with a sharper smile, full of the tragic voluptuousness of him who is going to kill himself, he had carefully replaced the heavy stone above his head with a strength astonishing in those slender and long fingers of his, very slowly, shutting himself up in a stupendous intimacy, in a hiding-place *they* would not suspect. . . . Did he look through the central hole in the slab, smiling for the last time at the life outside? . . . Superhuman and astonishing hoax! . . . And with a smile he threw himself down, like a swimmer, into the water in which he could not swim, and, with a smile, he became aqueous, aqueous unto death.

After this particular case of madness, the village remained more puzzled and more startled than ever, fighting back with more strength and more awareness, like one who fights back a sob which already has reached the lips, the conscious madness, passion's only recourse in the absence of any remedies and outlets.

IX

Doña Onesifora—O absurd Castilian names, chosen among the strangest ones in the Saints' roll-muster in order to give a little variety to life! . . . (Eleuteria, Estilita, Eufemia, Servanda, Eudosia, Prepedigna, Clemente, Oroncio, Atanasio, Caricio, Teofilo, Deogracias, Silvano, Salustiano, etc., etc.)—Doña Onesifora had been a very gay woman—in the proper sense of the word;—but as such a gaiety was impossible in the village, everybody repulsed it like something indecent, nobody helped her, nobody laughed with her and wry faces met her superabundant laughter. Nevertheless Doña Onesifora became not a whit less gay because she found no one to share her gaiety with, and, independent and valiant, when she realized that she had become a hopeless spinster, she separated herself from her brothers—the richest men in the village—and, shutting herself up in one of the houses on her estate, she took to drink. Being the owner of some extensive vineyards—*majuelos,* as they are called locally—she could always be seen about them, taking care of them maternally, lifting up a bunch of grapes here, straightening out a

shoot there, while acting at the same time as a protecting scarecrow. Her predilection was the thick, deceitful must, which ferments within the breast, which causes the heart to ferment, which attacks the head, first as must, then as it slowly turns into wine, as wine, in a double-action, complicated "drunk." Oh, formidable fondness for the must which colors the lips purple, dyes the blood and besmears the face! . . .

Doña Onesifora went mad as a result of her splendid "drunks"; without lowering herself, however, in the least. She always remained the lady whom no one dares poke fun at, and who is the only drunken female at whom the children do not cast stones. Thus, without prostituting nor lowering herself, she keeps on being gay and playful.

However, she is gradually becoming invisible; still, people always think of her, away in that strange house which looks like a drunken woman too, attended to by her ancient female servant who has become a drunkard herself by dint of carrying upstairs so many jars out of the inexhaustible cellar. But Doña Onesifora has not lost the ultimate good sense which enables her to share in the wealth of hams and rashers. Attractive Doña Onesifora! One pictures her as she compensates and satiates herself, she who never knew the arbitrary and renovating gaiety, the gaiety that enlightens and cheers, she, who, possessor of the virile, huge casks in a rich cellar, goes on exhausting the musty shoots whose stock shall die with her. . . . Wise, cheering and intrepid wine-bibber!

Postscript

Throughout this narrative I have kept wondering, "How shall I say this?" . . . And since the picture of Valle would be incomplete if I left out something which is essential to the village, something which is wonderful in color and in seduction, I will now paint Señorita Florencia's story at the end, though it may be late.

Señorita Florencia was the most passionate and ardent woman I have ever seen.

Señorita Florencia was the only woman in Valle who "had gone wrong." She was not a "free" woman. No. She was a pure young girl who had committed a transgression. The scandal had been hushed up by her parents, but the story had leaked out and people stared at her knowingly, exchanging with her intense glances of admiration, praise and veneration. She, in good weather, would sit on the threshold of her house which stood alongside the highway,

and in her eyes there was a volcanic brownness, a fascinating cavity —like a gypsies' cave—a concentrated look, skeptical, of a prudent and joyful skepticism, of a sacrilegious joyfulness, wholly unexpected in such a village. Not even in Seville have I ever seen any Andalusian brunette who surpassed, who concentrated in herself such tragic, anxious and delectable swarthiness. (Oh, to spend a night lying with her in the secrecy of her house in Valle! What an extraordinary experience it would have been!)

We always went our way towards her house, in order to pass before it, in order to reach somewhat the supreme and free attainment of seeing the heroine in her piece. She was the only woman who had dared, and I believe that the whole village stared at her simultanously with black anger, envy and illumination, as though she were a goddess of some merry and anachronistic cult discovered in some excavation practised in the edge of the village. She was the only sane figure there, full of a satirical and gracious laziness which, to us, seemed to be beyond the madness and the dumb fanaticism of all the others, as though she had achieved in the test a hellenic fire and flavor. In her were all the freshness, all the orientation, all the imagination and all the incontinence. Señorita Florencia would not go mad. She had escaped madness definitely, and she seemed to look with superiority, as though they were a mysterious and refreshing garden in the peace of her soul, at the obscure and supercilious gentry around her. She looked like one of those trees which seem illumined by a roseate electricity and dazzle the wintry gardens, mitigating their grey lonesomeness, replete with greying hairs.

O houri of Castile, who perhaps flat-nosed, and perhaps mustachioed, and perhaps wrinkled, achieved nevertheless in the midst of the depressing atmosphere a splendor, an aroma and an essence that were both enervating and concentrated, and by which we were asphyxiated, carried away and darkened, as by an ardent, dense, mollifying and spasmodic shadow!

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE FIRE IN THE BAWDY-HOUSE

The fire in the bawdy-house was something of a revelation.

Who might have guessed that there were so many women in the rear of that narrow house?

For a long time white figures of women in their chemises kept

on running out of the door which was lit "al giorno" by the fire. That procession of phantoms with loose hair seemed endless. It was a wonderful show.

"I have lost several thousand beds!" was the picturesque lamentation of the Madame. "I have lost several thousand beds!"

Her excitement was comprehensible. Nothing costs so much money as a bed, and above all a solid and comfortable bed. Therefore: several thousand beds! This was horrible indeed.

Those innumerable women in their chemises, some of them of ample curves, and others of a provocative angularity, together with the fire's brilliancy, imparted to the night an atmosphere of sensuality which was reminiscent of hell. Yet they all looked like college girls routed by the fire out of their chaste dormitory beds.

It all looked impossible! How could they have all found room within—not only standing room, but lying-down room as well?

The discovery had been fantastic, but more fantastic still was the news that came the following day, after the fire was put out, to the effect that the bodies of over a hundred women had been found, burned to a crisp by the fire, in that incredible rear of the small house.

Such is clandestine prostitution.

THE CHILD THAT GOT LOST

Reuben got lost, got lost as he had got lost before on previous afternoons, and he remembered that on those occasions when he had got lost, his mother, upon finding him again, instead of kissing him because he had been found, had whipped him and pulled him afterwards by an arm as though she were dragging him on the ground.

The boy, fearing that the same thing would happen once more, fled as though he wished to get lost further, desperately further, since he had got lost again.

Thus no one ever found Reuben, for he had got definitely lost among those unfrequented dunes at the end of roads, in which *anybody* might get lost.

(Muestrario.)

NEW "GREGUERIAS" (Outcries)

When we spill an ink-stand, it looks as though we had wantonly spilt the blood of Christ.

. . . . .

There is something cerebral in a nut. A nut is a tiny brain. We eat it, it is vegetable brain-matter, within the living inclosure of which there were hermetic thoughts that corresponded to the distinct circumvolutions of the nut.

. . . . .

Let us pray the Lord every day to spare us that illness which must be so dreadful: the Scorbut; more dreadful, no doubt, than the Black Plague.

. . . . .

The most terrible noise of the world occurs when a silk hat falls down to the ground.

. . . . .

The aeroplane must not be compared to the eagle, nor to any other majestic bird. . . . It is nothing but a big bat, a bat discolored and transparent at midday, a bat with sharp and angular outlines, what with those outjuttings of the ribs in the wings, like a bat's. At night it looks more like a bat. A man-made bird could be but a mammal bird.

. . . . .

There shall issue forth a new kind of light, a new apparatus, a new bulb, which will render us irremediably obsolete. . . . We shall have no recourse against it. . . . That light shall not be comparable to ours, it shall be sadder, everything shall be filled with it, and thus the night shall be turned into a new splendid midday. . . . Just as we fancy that our ancestors lived steeped in darkness, so the masters of that new kind of light shall fancy that we lived in a darkness just as great.

. . . . .

There is always a tiny hole in our bedroom through which we are being watched by *somebody* who never loses sight of us.

. . . . .

I thought I had already seen that head on some middle-aged woman, on another woman who was tall and fully developed, when I met it on a tiny girl with a narrow body.

. . . . .

The fellow who, when riding in a carriage or a motor car, slides his arm into those arm-supporters, those slings that hang on either

side of the carriage, gives himself away as one who is not used to riding and is maimed of the necessary distinction.

. . . . .

I've heard a woman utter a dreadful curse upon one of those automobiles equipped with a musical horn: "I wish they'd bury you with your damned music!"

. . . . .

To gaze at the sky while riding in a cab is like strolling in summer along a river bank.

. . . . .

From afar comes to me the idea of the breathing of one who is dying, whom it were sufficient to remove in order to save his life. . . . But he is far, very far, he is remote. No one will save him so easily, and he shall breathe thus all the night long—I hear him, I hear him—until morning when the telegraph will announce the news to his relatives here.

. . . . .

There is a moment in the night when everything is filled with electric light. This is just before our lucidity is extinguished within ourselves. Our inner light factory exhausts its fluid in one ultimate gasp. Everything is flooded under a thick and dull whiteness and afterwards, as though the wick were consumed, the eyes wink dreamily.

. . . . .

Ships have too many sirens. It is plain that they are in abject fear, with all those sirens pointing everywhere. Sirens to hear, others to call, sirens that are terse and stiff ears full of susceptibility, and sirens that are like yawning and long-snouted mouths made more sonorous yet by those cupped hands of theirs.

. . . . .

The poor creature who vomits blood has just been *murdered* by God, murdered with cold steel, stabbed vilely, more vilely than by a stab in the back, for the stab was delivered from within, and in darkness!

. . . . .

Who would have guessed that you were destined to be the girl who whispers all these things to passers-by! You, who used to listen to no one and would let no one take your hand.

. . . . .

The petty street hawkers—vendors of peanuts and other trifles—are the only ones who know what actually has taken place in the squares, the parks and the streets where they sit all day long. . . . Time drains itself into them. They have seen everything that has gone by: the ambulance, the drunkard and, perhaps, even a royal coach drawn by caparisoned horses, one of those coaches *we* never see any more simply because we never linger at street corners long enough.

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Benjamin Jarnés

Benjamin Jarnés one of the newest-comers in Spain. His Paula y Paulita, *1929, is a book remarkable for its lucidity, the white light that plays over it, the broad white surfaces it exposes. The book is fantasy, not wholly unreminiscent of M. Giradoux, but in it are some unlooked-for strokes of psychologic observation. We have here a new universe, to be played with joyously, as children play with a toy, to be treated like a "domestic lion." The author is in quest of a new horizon, where sense and spirit may meet, and the result is the conferring of a new and fresh significance upon the object. In this world, beings are no longer to be prolonged, as shadows, into the external universe; the path lies, rather, inward and downward, in the direction of light.*

M. Marcel Brion, writing in Les Nouvelles Littéraires, *termed the following Preface "an introduction to a new art of reality." It is in the nature of a new* Ars poetica. *Here, we see the work of art springing from the shock, the outbreak of hostilities, between the artist and the world. (See the General Introduction.) What we have is the inception of a* Vita nuova.

Señor Jarnés also has some new ideas on biography, which will be found set forth in the extract, following, from the Preliminary Note to his Sor Patrocinio.—*S. P.*

PREFACE TO "PAULA AND PAULITA"

1

I have before me a modern building. It is a country-house, a villa. Its façade is a white, neat, rectangular wall, broken here and there by black, precise squares. Each front in the new architecture is yet another square. And another the coping and footing of the balustrade. And the garden wall.

No projecting roofs, no niches, no columns, no stepping-stones, no friezes, no pediments. Planes, planes, planes. And, behind, a few trees. Lines, dry angles—perfect, bare. And, in the background, the baroque volume—gold and green—of the countryside.

I open a book of poems: agile lines, thin lyrical jets, buried pathos, emotions strangled by the implacable string of irony, drawings of smiles. And, behind, menacing, glowering, the schoolmaster's ferule, threatening to fall down upon the naked structure. If the architect is threatened by *wild* nature, the poet is threatened by the unbearable *school.*

And, in a painter's studio—let's remember Francisco Bores'—canvases stained with ashen greys, with earthen whites, among which one glimpses dim, tremulous, rudimentary shapes, sketches of beings, larval structures, supportless, without tentacles to enslave attention, without any anxiety to reap laurels: lyrical stems of unknown flowers sticking out of a ground made bare, stripped by the harrow of its ultimate roots.

Art has gone down to the Jordan and cast into it its load of misdemeanors. As it returns from its baptism, it keeps putting off the time to dress up again. Freed of the overwhelming burden of the ages, it takes breath and enjoys the holiday, unable yet to set to work again, to sin again—for in sin alone is it possible to prove original, since virtue prefers the common rule. Art stammers. Staggers. Abstains.

Art is afraid.

It knows not what to paint upon the bare wall.

2

That is the ultimate reason for the bare, virgin rectangle and the grey canvas.

Art is afraid. This is an artistic period which has nothing heroic

about it, unless we might call heroism an excess of prudence. The artist has nothing with which to cover up his nudity, thrown as he is out of the fertile paradise of exuberant fancy, of dishevelled caprice. You feel that this façade, this canvas, this page would repulse the least suspicious relief, be it of the most sombre kind. And all out of *fear*. Out of fear of renewing its broken relationships with the traditional wardrobe.

Indiscretion, frivolity, lightness, impatience are banished. But so great a distrust becomes suspicious. It resembles shy poverty too closely. Azorin has remarked that the young contemporary artists are not sufficiently daring. Corpus Barga had already spoken of the timidity of certain Spanish writers.

True, true. A petrified writer alone could speak of audacities in the juvenile art of the present. The most intelligent among the artists of our day have fallen into that timidity—a graceful sister to fear—which is affrighted by any noisy exhibition. Some sentence their work, already extensive, to delicacies, to revisions, to eternal reservations. The boldest artist—and the most timid—take to cover, shrink into themselves. Out of disdain? Out of debility?

Perhaps because they handle the compass much too well. In art it may be necessary to be somewhat blind, to possess the tiniest dose of heedlessness. And in our day the writer knows too well the roads which are to be avoided carefully. Being confronted by the impossibility of inventing new ones, he inhibits himself.

Never before was everything so completely at a beginning. A sincere mind venerates and admires its betters, but does not believe it to be its duty to follow their examples of fecundity.

(Gongora's case is unique and perhaps not as convincing as it is believed to be. A passionate centennial celebration caused his *Soledades* to be re-read with fervor, and this re-reading—which for many was a first reading—kindled in a number of our poets a nervous anxiousness, like that of a child on a holiday, to repeat the graceful modes and the decayed themes of Don Luis. But the celebration passed away, and with it that curious albeit scarcely fecund mimicry. The splendid past shall continue gravely wheedling the professor and the scholar, but the true artist prefers to be on his way without turning his head.)

Art is returning to its cell. In architecture, to the plane. In the pentagram, to the pure melodic line. In the poem, to the skeleton of the image.

Nudity. Point of departure. Swimming-pool. Sanitarium.

And a great fear, a great fear of committing fresh mistakes. No prodigal son will undertake the march forward. All are too fond of the classical she-calf that keeps sending her father away to be butchered. Only the youngest of all, the younger brother—as in André Gide's poem—will know enough to run out into the fields without saying a word, toward the lands of adventure. Although he may stub his toe against the acorns, against the pigs.

3

A work of art is always an impact against something which was there, near us, living plainly, without presuming that out of itself a miracle might come forth. There is always a breaking out of hostilities between the world and the true artist, when an original work begins to be produced. Of a sudden the easy rhythm of things is interrupted, and a hurried, feverish, intense tempo begins; a new life begins: that of art.

To this state no undetermined artist may arrive, to it timorous art may not arrive. Such an artist is afraid of failing in the execution, and he awaits the impetus of some superior force.

For this reason, he avoids all immoderate acts. He fails to remember that the execution may be a series of unsuspected moments of genius. All preconceived ideas are very doubtful in art. To such a state of exceptional wonders—as Paul Valéry would put it—fear cannot arrive.

And we have come to such a pass that the man endowed with decision is awaited. Things are around us laden with possibilities of beauty, as with a luminous inexhaustible electricity which we could bring forth suddenly by placing our finger near them. Everything, in turn, awaits the rape of the artist. Matter proves always docile to a sincere mind whose vitality is a continuous creation.

And fear can only originate in a scant acquaintance with beings; and this scant acquaintance can only be born out of a lack of love, and such a lack of love can only be the fruit of a fatal cowardly knowledge. A paltry perception of men and things may kindle no passionate light: I mean that perception which neither books nor years may teach. And this flame alone can shorten the distance between the world and ourselves. We shall therefore name fear a certain spiritual coldness—which at times is heedlessly attributed to reason—capable of opening wide empty spaces between the mind and things.

4

We must again fall in love with the world, laughingly, like children. We must become intimate with it. Be disrespectful to it. Pull it by the mane, like a tame lion.

We must remember that an idea can only take shape in what is perceptible to the senses. In that perception which we have made ours, which we have kneaded into a mass where the personal yeast of our mind has taken hold. Without gesticulating. Without shrieking.

Art is afraid, because it has forgotten the road where the world and the mind come together' the road of intelligent love, capable of propelling stars, ideas and men.

Only such a love may cause us again to paint something upon the bare wall.

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

A PRELIMINARY NOTE

TO

Sor Patrocinio

A novel is the art of creating a man, a biography is the art of resuscitating one. When the writer has within reach of his hand that wonderful mud out of which was kneaded an original structure capable of thought and of love, he approaches the grave—the museum, the archives, the in-folio—removes the great stone and cries: "Come forth!"

Voice of an artist, voice of a man capable of transmitting the distant live vibration of a personality. The voice of the people, which was never the voice of God, would evoke a phantom. A popular biography is something unthinkable, because the people nourish themselves with irradiations, that is to say with fables, with shapeless facts. Likewise the voice of the erudite man—the merely erudite man—because he would evoke a Lazarus bound like the Biblical one hand and foot with grave-clothes which are neither rent nor loosened by the sound of the divine voice, leaving the resuscitated one as active and lively as in the days when he actually lived. An amorphous mass of materials cannot produce a biography. No

more so than a biography can be produced by a swarm of legends.

And even less by a swarm of prejudices. The true biographer does not intend reconstituting a personality according to the mummified and reiterated opinion of a group. The true biographer must heed no voice whatever, he must behold with serenity the heap of possible documents, and set forth in the company of his Lazarus over the same roads which the latter once trod. Obeying his model, while in the novel, the model must be the obedient one.

It would be absurd to imagine an absolutely impartial biographer. Not so much to imagine a generous one, with wide comprehension, never hostile to tradition, but always on the watch for the excesses of inflated traditions, for one-sided fanatical documents, for eulogies, for derogatory insinuations, for everything which is a consequence of feverish states of mind, of hot turbid moments, of opinions.

. . . . . .

Even so, in a biography there are two things: historical truth, expression of a physiognomy. Historical truth—a tame snake—may slip between our fingers; but we might perhaps sketch a few lines, express a few authentic gestures. (The purpose of biography—says Sidney Lee—is "the truthful transmission of a personality." A difficult task. The work of a scholar and an artist both.)

That is the reason why all biography is incomplete.

With it all, that rich product of the mind: personality, that wonderful product of the earth: man, are again captivating the attention of science and the arts. A desire to confront man is inducing both writers and readers to review bit by bit the vibrant, seductive flood of the human river. Because each biography of a great man is a window out of which we lean to gaze upon the pageant of the ages, through which we appraise any glint of culture, any tension or extreme relaxation of energies.

There are two ways of knowing the past: through texts and through men. These sometimes go together, especially when the distant past is concerned; but the proper study of a good biographer must be—like a good novelist's—that of *psychological microscopy*. To be able to read in chronicles and in man the things which a first glance usually fails to find in either; to be able to discover that fine net of unaccomplished purposes, of influences, of erotic failures pompously disguised as triumphs of the mind, of diminutive cruelties, of pride dressed up in the vestments of humility. . . .

And so, some fact which we deem over-known—or openly inexpressive—shall offer us a novel foreshortening; we shall draw nearer, in so far as it is possible, to the slow elaboration of great events, to the painful disintegration of tottering structures. We shall become acquainted with the whole family of tiny rodents who keep on digging, while the pick-axe and the bomb-shell repose, joyfully and trustfully.

The vast historical canvas is—in all the arts—a monumental text which can hardly serve us further except as an emotional reminder of altogether old-fashioned costumes. It depicts another act of the "great human comedy," but we wish to see something more than a group of actors who know their parts. Rather do we seek those who barely know them, those who are rehearsing them and have stage-fright; those who at every step are compelled to improvise and, in the act of improvising, are apt to reveal themselves.

A vacillation is always more significant than a rectilinear act. The curves of character are those a good biographer must study, just as the curves of the road are those a good chauffeur must study. Not the easy straight lines between extreme points, in preference to the winding path.

To know the latter is to know an intimacy.

. . . . .

Art returns to man. The writer enjoys penetrating into those fields of experimentation, into those fecund hot-houses where the plant—man—is cultivated, which we call biographies.

We have wished to fill out with sincerity the graphic chart of a soul possessing a savory emotional content, if not a great mind.

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Pedro Salinas

Pedro Salinas is another of the youngest. The Spanish translator of Proust, he prolongs the intimate tradition of Antonio Machado. —*J. C.*

RAVINGS ANENT THE POPLAR AND THE CYPRESS

Introduction. As you went by in the train, your idle glance was caught by two distant trees, stuck in the deepest indentation of the horizon, identical landmarks, both, like the twin verticals of a

gigantic and frustrated H. The somnolent attention of your mind shook itself and, spurred on by a childish celerity and diligence, rushed to its duties and, leaving the train, climbed slopes, negotiated short-cuts, cleared ditches and, having reached the distant horizon, satisfied itself by means of scrupulously meticulous tests of vision and of feeling, that those two trees that looked so much alike, were in fact a poplar and a cypress. Whereupon your mind flew promptly back to the nearest station where the train stood awaiting its return and, settling once more in the inspiring solitude of the carriage which was so nicely balanced by the fugitive and allusive company of the lateral landscapes, it wrote in its American note-book, "Aphorism for the morrow: At a distance, alike; at close range, so parallel that never the twain shall meet." The writing was shaky, either on account of the excitement caused by such a discovery, or of the moving seat which any rolling railroad conveyance offers to the steadiest aphorist.

Poplar. Last night, beneath the concave whisperings of the stars, you were, do confess it, content with your fate and even amused for a few hours in a deep and lustral immobility. But at the earliest dawn doth jump the earliest wind, and once more you threw yourself into the tortured computation of profiles in motion against peaceful horizons, of outlines undone like a tress of hair in their very first intention to live, all full, all replete to overflowing, asphyxiated in your transitory shape by the affluence in your womb of shapes so numerous and so eager already to try themselves out. If you shape yourself one hundred times, one hundred times you unshape yourself, and you live like a chain, from one link to the next. You enjoy but scanty fame in the vicinity, poor poplar, and despite your frantic gesticulations, you shall not escape being a sower of intentions in the midst of this wilful Castilian wilderness which is so keenly aware of what is being done. For you are never very far from that tame and equivocal angel who keeps whispering into your diminutive ears the dangerous advice that your shape never shall become definite except through a tortured sequence of infinite deformations.

Cypress. No one ever caught you learning, so short was your apprenticeship. Your unfailing root hardly sinks into the ground, yet it manages to find the juices of buried discipline. With that lordly dignity which is inherent to all achievements of form, you

concentrate your vital efforts upon a proud and confident insistency to cast a straight profile against the soft blue landscape or the abrupt tormented sky. And when it comes, the day finds you toiling over the patient undertaking of your own sculpture, lying in wait for the sole advice of your own shadow as cast upon the ground by sun or moon.

Poplar, water. Every landscape dances to the music of its water, be it sea, river or creek. But where in summer—the seas being so far away, all watercourses without the tiniest trickle and the sierras snowless now—could Castile find her life-waters, if not in the humid and indefatigable mobility of the poplars, in the vast wave-breaking of the distant poplar groves, in the bubbling of the foliage and in that arid drop, the poplar's leaf with which one is spattered of a windy evening? And delusive rivers and seas all dance their water behind that precise and transparent veil which is hung in front of the landscape by the dry Castilian dusk.

Incidental anecdote. For eight days we had walked nothing but the asphalted prairies of the city, and our only solace was the luminous mass of shadows cast by the street-lights, out of their wonderful nocturnal foliage. And as you were homesick for the ground and for the poplars of Castile, I took you to the Art Museum. Neither did you tread ground there, but polished wood whose smell of turpentine tricked you into imagining that you were vaguely crossing strange fields overgrown with grass emitting some penetrating and artificial perfume, in an Australian estate. You saw no sky; instead, wise crystal-hangings where the light of the fiery days was tempered and domesticated. And no horizon other than the four walls pierced by the small window-frames of the pictures, some of which through oversight were deprived of glass-panes, so that one could lean into them with half the body out. I lead you to the portrait room and there, in the tiny eyes of an unknown character (black dress, faded beard, earthly color) stood your Castilian tree, timid and vacillating soul, in love and weeping like a summer poplar immediately after the rain—all shaky before this and that, light, air, smoke, poplar. Jokingly, you wrote in the catalogue: "Identified one portrait of an unknown man by El Greco. Portrait of a poplar with vague physiognomical and vestimentary accessories. To be transferred to the landscape room."

Poplar, autumn. Tumults of silver, fervors of gold, pomp and circumstance of May, pride of October, farewell, farewell. The wintry wind spurs on the dolorous penitences, and all along the paths in Castile the bare poplars twist themselves with the dry rattling of neat skeletons, to flagellate their own white bones, final miseries. Upon the ground, maddened by persecution and agony, closely pursued by the ascetic pack of hounds of the cold northern blasts, the ultimate sensualities go fleeing, golden dry leaves.

Cypress, before Death. The cypress is an irrevocable decision of self-salvation. Not for a single day, imbodied in the withered impulse of an unbreakable outline, its will has swerved away from the celestial goal; and its never-changed sack-cloth, worn out and greyed by rain, sunshine, wind-storms and years, cheerfully offers the best vestments to disinterestedness. In this foggy night, which is a close likeness to Death, which is the very brink of Death, one may see on the cypress, worn down to the bone and spindle-shaped, that long and incorporeal whiteness of the shapes with which the painters represent in their pictures the souls rising to well-deserved heavens, with the help of two sustaining angels.

Poplar, wood of the Cross. Though you may not die for all, you suffer for all. Neither the sky's leaden cloud, nor the beagle asleep in the ditch, nor those tenuous ringlets of hair, so quiet upon a girlish nape, nor the bells hung and strangled in their spires, nobody, nobody feels that inimical fleeting wind which passes through the air, nobody shudders or sacrifices himself. It merely dashes against your tiny leaves, against yourself, O poplar, and while the entire afternoon is spared anxiety because it is dull, deaf and low, you, sentinel for all, stand in the apparent total calm to defend the desperate duty of delicate longings.

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

José Bergamin

José Bergamin has one of the most unusual turns of mind to be found among the young generation; in him is to be found a singular critical lucidity combined with a tortuous and arbitrary passion that bears the mark of Unamuno.—J. C.

CHARACTERS

The Exacting One

He demanded everything with violence. He accosted everyone, brutally, quick and angry, to *demand,* were it only a trifle. He did not covet perfection in anything nor in any one, but expected from everything a demand corresponding to his own. At times, without knowing what he wanted or what he did not want, he became wild, demanding that his wants be attended to, and if they were attended to at once, he would become sullen, absorbed, as though he had received a blow in the pit of the stomach; later, he would apologize clumsily and wait a while until something came up, some deficiency in the people around him, that should render his demand without appeal, imperative and absolute.

The Fake Jew

He was not a Jew but he laughed like one. His was the mock laughter of the Jew, who has no laughter and wishes to imitate the laughter of others because he knows that laughter is *the* antidote to Semitism, that laughter kills the Jew (and the Devil as well).

He belonged to the variety of fat Jews, the most avaricious one, of those Jews who are inflated with water because they shut up their kidneys like their purses and get swollen and whitish with tumefaction.

And worst of all, he had a rabbit's face.

I never put any trust in his friendship; everything in him was falsification, deviousness, duplicity and double-crossing.

Surely he lacked a soul since, though he were not soulless, his thirst-compelling animation was as false as his laughter.

His falsehood was twofold: he was not even a Jew.

The Admirable One

It looked as though the stars were reflected in the depths of his eyes as in the wells of his profound enjoyment. The quiet water of his pupils made creation transparent by reversing it in its magic mirror for the purpose of re-creating it; the universe was a fancy of his which his lyrical zeal improved upon at every turn. He made everything beautiful—poetically—merely by glancing at it. He gazed upon his own thoughts, in solitude, as upon a naked body.

He possessed the diamond-like virtue of cutting crystal without breaking it or hurting himself; he isolated himself upon his crystals—a live instrument—to obtain, like a musical sound, beauty pure and exact.

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE POETS OF TODAY

Rafael Alberti

Rafael Alberti is the leading representative of young Spanish Super-realism.

From ABOVE THE ANGELS

1. The Dead Angels

Search, search for them:
In the insomnia of forgotten gutters,
In the river beds interrupted by the silence of rubbish heaps.
Not far from the puddles that cannot hold a cloud,
Lost eyes,
A broken ring
Or a trampled-on star.

Because I have seen them
In the momentary rubble that appears in mists.
Because I have touched them
In the exile of a defunct brick
Come to nothing from a tower or a cart.
Never further than collapsing chimneys
Nor than those tenacious leaves that leave a mark on shoes.
In all.
More in those stray sticks that are consumed without being burnt.
In those deep absences that rickety furniture suffers.
Not very far from names and signs that go cold on walls.

Search, search for them:
Below the drop of wax that buries a word in a book
Or the signature of one of those corners of letters
That the dust brings, rolling.
Near the lost end of a bottle,
Near the wandering sole of a boot in the snow,
Near an abandoned razor on the edge of a precipice.

2. Punishments

It is when gulfs and bays of blood,
Coagulated with defunct and vindictive stars,
Inundate dreams.
When gulfs and bays of blood
Wipe out the navigation of beds
And, on the right of the world, a dead angel forgets.
When the winds taste of sulphur
And nocturnal mouths of bone and glass and wire.
Listen to me.

I did not know that doors changed places,
That souls could blush for their bodies,
And that, at the end of a tunnel, light brought death.
Listen to me again.
Those who sleep want to escape.
But those tombs in the sea are not fixed,
Those tombs that in carelessness and fatigue open from the sky
Are not permanent
And the dawns stumble against disfigured faces.
Listen to me again.
Listen further.

There are nights in which the hours turn to stone in the spaces,
In which the veins do not flow
And the silences raise centuries and future gods.
Think of the destroyed spheres
Of the dry orbits of homeless men
Of mute millenniums.
Further, still further,
Listen to me.

We see that bodies are not where they were
That the moon is turning cold from being looked at
That the crying of a child upsets the constellations.
Mossy skies rust our bare brows
On which each minute entombs its nameless corpse.
Listen to me.
Listen to me, finally.

Because there is always one last after the disappearance of wildernesses,
After the coming of the cold in the dreams that one neglects,
After the fallings of death on the skeleton of nothingness.

3. The False Angel

To *Maruja Mallo*

So that I might be able to walk between the knots of the roots
And the bony dwellings of worms.
So that I might be able to listen to the decomposed crackings of the world
And able to bite the petrified light of the stars,
At the west of my dream you put up your tent, false angel.

Those who, united by the same current of water, you see me,
Those who, bound by one treason and the falling of a star, you listen to me,
Hide yourselves in the abandoned voices of ruins,
Listen to the slowness of a stone folding towards death.
Do not loose hold of each other's hand (do not separate your hands).

There are spiders that die without a nest
And ivies that, at the contact of a shoulder, take fire and rain blood.
The moon makes lizards' skeletons transparent.
If you remember the sky
The anger of the cold will rise sharp on the thistles
Or in the dissimulation of trenches that strangle
The only repose that dawns have: the birds.
Those who think about the living will see clay models
Inhabited by faithless, tireless angels:
The sleep-walking angels who plane the orbits of fatigue.

Why go on?
The humidities of broken glasses are intimate
And after a bad dream the frost calls forth nails
Or scissors capable of freezing the mourning on crows.

All is finished
You may flatter yourself in the faded train of comets that bury themselves
That you have killed one who was dead,
That you have given the unsleeping boredom of tears to a shadow,
That you have asphyxiated the death-rattle of atmospheric layers.

(*Translated by* Thomas McGreery.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *The New Review.*)

Jorge Guillén

Jorge Guillén is a young poet in the Valéry tradition, or at least under the Valéry influence.—S. P.—Certain of his poems are marked by a striking surety of touch and attain a diamond-like perfection. —J. C.

Going Out

To go out at last, to go out
To glories, to the dews.
(Certain already the waiting
Fatal already the impulses);
To slip on the gilded freshness
Of summer.
Thanks! even to the opposition
To the waves of the joyful
Tact of the muscles
Submitted to instinct;
Set free, set free without fear.
Light and cries
Across the central dawn
Of a paradise
To drown oneself in plenitude
And be reborn seeing clear.

(Runs of virgin spaces
Unheard harmonies!)
Happy, swift, starry
Light and without a friend!

The Shadows

Sun. Active curtain:
Beating shadows.—Who enters?
They fly. It is I: footprints.

(Oh, with quivering
Of eyelid, curtain
Of solitude or love)!

I want the transparent.
Also I want the shadows,
Transparent and gay.

(The shadows, so cunning,
Dream with the palm
Of the hand that caresses)!

Perhaps my hand? . . . But
No, not possible. The shadows
Are intangible! dreams.

Sea Fronts

This sun of the sand
Leads the hands of children:
The hands that save the shells
From dangers.
Shells: under the sands
Lean towards the children:
Children, who already lean towards the sun. . . .
But the sun, rectilinear,
Comes. The rays, vast,
High up, so continuous,
Massed, overflow,
Arrive—even if their splendours,
Bounding unceasingly,

From vehemence to vehemence
Of the waves, break—
Here, at last, stretched
Surrender to hands
That are smaller. . . . Oh, blonde bonds! . . .
And shells, shells. . . .
Harmony, closing, circle.

(*Translated by* Thomas McGreery.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Frederico Garcia Lorca

Frederico Garcia Lorca, like Alberti, is a young Andalusian, and his verse shares certain qualities with Alberti's.

From "The Martyrdom of St. Olalla (Gypsy Romances)"

To *Rafael Martinez Nadal.*

1. Panorama of Merida

In the street, rearing and running,
A long-tailed horse.
And playing and dozing
Old soldiers of Rome.
Half the hill of Minerva
Opens its leafless arms.
Airy water gilds again
The ledges of the rocks.
Night of laid-out torsoes
And stars with broken noses
Waits for the fissures of the dawn
. . . Before collapsing altogether.
From time to time, sounded
The blasphemies of the red-comb.
Sighing, the Holy Child
Breaks the crystal of the cups.
The wheel gives an edge to knives
And sharply curved hooks.

The bull of the anvils bellows
And Merida is crowned
With opening mat-weed
And stems of prickly pears.

2. The Martyrdom

Naked, Flora goes up
By the little stairs of water.
The Consul asks for a platter
For the breasts of Olalla.
A jet of green veins
Spurts from her throat.
Her vagina trembles in disarray
Like a bird caught in briars.
On the ground, in disorder already,
Her cut-off hands, writhe,
That might still interlock, in feeble
Decapitated orison.
Across the red holes
Where her breasts were
One sees little skies
And rivulets of white milk.
A thousand little trees of blood
Cover all her shoulder
And oppose damp trunks
To the surgeon's knife of the flames.
Yellow centurions,
With gray flesh, sleepless
Arrive at the sky, clanking
Their silver armour.
And as it vibrates, a confused
Passion of manes and swords,
The Consul bears on a platter
The smoking breasts of Olalla.

3. Inferno and Glory

Undulating snow rests.
Olalla hangs from the tree.
Her burnt nakedness
Blackens the frozen air.

The stretched-out night gleams.
Olalla dead on the tree.
The inkstand of the towns
Slowly upsets the ink.

Black tailors' mannequins
Cover the snow of the field
In long files that moan
Its mutilated silence.
Broken snow commences.
Olalla white on the tree.
Squadrons of nickel unite
The beaks in her side.

A Monstrance gleams
Over the burnt skies,
Between river throats
And bouquets of nightingales
Coloured glass splashes.
Olalla white in the white.
Angels and seraphim
Say: Holy, Holy, Holy.

(*Translated by* Thomas McGreery.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

THE LITERARY JOURNALISTS

Salvador de Madariaga

Salvador de Madariaga is a tri-lingual writer. A former student at the Polytechnique and at the École des Mines in Paris, he writes in French, as well as in Spanish and English. An engineer by profession, he in 1927 resigned the position he had held for five years as head of the Disarmament Section of the League of Nations, to accept the chair of Spanish at Oxford University. In connection with his labors for the League of Nations, his international sympathies were intensified. In his books, he is constantly engaged in confronting English, French and Spanish psychology. M. Cassou alludes to him as a Spanish Maurois, and the comparison is not inapt. He has

a faculty of reducing questions to a certain half-jocular simplicity. He is, in general, a close student of Occidental ideas and manners.

Madariaga was born in 1886, his maternal grandmother being French, his education was largely French. Before entering the Polytechnique, he attended the College de Chaptal at Paris. Despite rapid advances in his profession, he soon abandoned it for letters. Taking up his residence in London in 1911, he married a Scotch lady whom he had known at the École des Chartes and at the Sorbonne. He contributes to the Spanish and South American Press, to the London Times, to Harper's Magazine an America to La Revue de Genève, to The Manchester Guardian, etc. Among his works in Spanish may be mentioned: Romances de Ciego *(a book that Unamuno carries in his pocket to read to friends);* La girafa sagrada; Semblanzas literarias; La fuente serena. *In English:* Shelley and Calderon; The Genius of Spain; The Sacred Giraffe; Spanish Folk Songs; Englishmen, Frenchmen and Spaniards. *The "Four Spaniards at London" from which the following extract is taken, was translated by the author himself from Spanish into French.*

DIALOGUE ON WOMEN

"Deva," said Blay, and his tone was not lacking in severity, "you promised to read us a few notes on feminism. I am astonished that you have not already begun, seeing that you have been here at least two minutes."

"You are quite right. I was waiting for some one to bring up the subject; for vanity doesn't exclude self-respect. And now that you have saved mine, get ready. It is an article which I am going to send to a paper in Barcelona.

BLUE-STOCKINGS AND GREEN-STOCKINGS

A man and a woman were engaged in a discussion; he was inclined to Don-Juanism, she to feminism.

"After all," said she, "there is very little difference between a man and a woman."

And he, thinking of the pleasures that he owed to that little difference, exclaimed: "Hurrah for the little difference!"

History does not record what the woman did, but it is certain that she did not smile. For one of the distinguishing features of feminism is that it causes its disciples to lose the faculty of smiling,

a faculty that is shared, as every one knows, by the gods, dogs and a few rare individuals. For it would be an error to attribute to feminism alone this grave defect, which is to be observed in all the "isms" in the world, from liberalism to absolutism, from maurism to bolshevism. The "ist" does not know how to smile.

The smile, in fact, is the kiss of two ideas. The flower of complexity, the smile only opens out where all the winds of the mind are blowing free, between the immensity of the sky and the vastness of the earth. The smile cannot live in the gloomy, shut-in atmosphere of churches, political circles, sects, academies, literary cliques. Geometry, ethics and aesthetics freeze it. It only lives on life.

Life contains everything, including the isms, that is, all the isms. For if each ism in itself is incomplete, they possess all together a plausible and positive doctrinal element, side by side a negative and intransigent one. Life adjusts them, keeps what is useful and consigns the remainder to nothingness, through the mutual destruction of impossibilities. Nothing provokes a smile like the meeting of two isms. Say Maurras and Lenin and you are bound to smile. The isms are like the straight lines that cross and re-cross to form a canvas. Left to themselves, the ists would make of us a society like those embroideries on canvas which our grandmothers used to make, with the profile of a lion to be seen amid cascades of right-angles, all of which was very funny, and which provoked a smile.

Feminism is an ism. But it is not so modern as one might think. Even if we leave antiquity to slumber on undisturbed, the French of the *Grand Siècle* had their more or less ridiculous feminists, whom they called *précieuses*. Rostand has left us a delightful portrait of one of these in his *Journée d'une précieuse*. In this trifle, Rostand gives the reader certain definite information concerning a feature of the feminine toilet which, however silly it may seem, is at bottom significant:

Car j'ai lu quelque part, dans un auteur en prose,
Et ne suis pas fâché de vous redire en vers
Que les bas-bleus du temps portaient tous des bas verts.

The point is not without its importance. As a matter of fact, the prose-writer has given the verse-writer a piece of misinformation. It is obvious that if the blue-stockings had worn green-stockings, it is by the latter name that they would be known. In reality, the verse-writer like the prose-writer has been led to make a mistake

through ignorance of the fact that there are two classes of feminists: the blue-stockings and the green-stockings. That, naturally, is an historic point, concerning which it behooves one to be precise; one must elucidate and analyze it.

The blue-stockings and the green-stockings are to be distinguished by their respective attitudes toward the little difference mentioned above. The blue-stockings endeavor to forget it, to abolish it, to wipe it off the map of reality. The blue-stocking is a feminist whose feminism ought to be known as hominism, inasmuch as her ideal is masculine. She indignantly refuses to admit in theory the male's superiority, but practically, she pays him the highest possible compliment by modeling her life after his. Her modes of dressing, walking, playing, associating with her fellows and working are all copied after those of the being whose superiority she denies. The blue-stocking deserts the fireside, for the reason that she finds it too feminine. Her vitality, fleeing sex, finds refuge in the brain. The blue-stocking is a feminist through her hatred of the feminine.

The green-stocking, far from despising the little difference, esteems it all too highly. Far from seeking to abolish it, she likes to cultivate it. The green-stocking is the true feminist, demanding as she does more freedom in which to be more feminine. She deserts the fireside for the reason that the fireside is not feminine enough. For the wife should be not merely a wife, but also a housekeeper, cook and, above all, a mother. But maternity is woman's redoubtable enemy, as redoubtable to woman as the fruit is to the flower, the summer to spring, wisdom to impulsiveness. The green-stocking's vitality does not go to her brain in order to flee sex, but that it may return from the brain richer in nuance, more highly conscious and better informed. It is in the nature of a running jump. The green-stocking is a feminist from love of the feminine.

The blue-stocking and the green-stocking have this in common, that they are both of the same hue. Both of them are "ists." Both are incapable of smiling. Both go out for freedom in a straight line. Now, freedom is an absolute good, like holiness, beauty, truth and distilled water, states of being the value of which is inestimable—providing we are given them in mixed doses. The world is made up of sulphur and chlorine and aluminium and many other simple bodies; but if, in place of being combined, these were to circulate in the pure and free state, just imagine the corrosion that would result. Life means a mixture, mixture . . .

These reflections, dear reader, are inspired by a young American

girl, a green-stocking to all appearances, who has just stirred up a rumpus in the British press by starting a violent campaign against marriage, which she accuses of being a prison for the woman. This green-stocking demands sensations and love, and declines to darn socks and do household accounts. I imagine that the most disagreeable of all accounts to her is the one in which all women make mistakes.

"Amusing but unjust," was Cerda's verdict. "The feminist movement has contributed in admirable fashion to the material and moral elevation of woman. Man-made laws still display a cave-man psychology; and if not physically, at least morally, the woman is still the slave of the male.

"That depends," objected Blay. "In my opinion, the English woman is not so badly off as all that. She is the queen of the household, of which she is the social head. She extends and receives invitations. She has the lead on her husband, and demands of the latter a courteous service that is not far from the humility of the true domestic. And in exchange for all these advantages and privileges, she gives nothing."

CERDA.—She gives children.

BLAY.—As little as possible and as few as possible. She brings them into the world with chloroform, hands them over to the nurse, and there is an end of that.

DEVA.—Don't believe that all this prestige corresponds to a real superiority. Fundamentally, the English woman occupies in her husband's life a place inferior to that of the French or Spanish woman, although superior to that of the German woman. She reigns over material things; and even there, she is but a constitutional queen, with all the forms but with no real power.

BLAY.—I don't say you are wrong. But the Spanish woman and the French woman are useful, whereas the English woman is good for nothing. Everything that's good in England is owing to the men. Take the question of food. The Englishman produces the best cattle in the world, the most exquisite fruit, wonderful butter, cheese and milk. Then, he turns over all these treasures to his wife, and what does she do with them? She makes stews that you can't eat. Until it comes to a point where the poor despairing Englishman ends by taking over the kitchen himself, as men take over everything, by industrializing it. England is the only country in the world where they sell bottled sauce.

. . . . .

AZUA.—. . . The English woman is not a good cook, for the reason that she does not care for the kitchen. That does not prove her inferiority, but rather her superiority. For on the other hand, she has good taste and knows how to live. In our Spanish houses, the kitchen eats up the man's money and the woman's life; English houses are firesides, and the kitchen is in its proper place—that is to say, in the basement.

DEVA.—There is some truth in all that, but it is to be explained in large part by Spain's poverty and England's wealth. The English woman imbibes the social and aesthetic tastes of that aristocratic circle which is the crowning glory of society; but in my opinion, her lack of culinary vocation is due to the fact that the culinary art is creative, and the English woman is not creative, but merely imitative.

BLAY.—And then, cooking calls for effort. The English woman hates domestic work and, in general, anything that means the sacrifice of her personality. This explains why England is a country where novels are greedily devoured. The novel is the refuge of idle women.

. . . . . .

CERDA.—Then you will grant that there is some good in feminism.

DEVA.—Not at all. Feminism impresses me as being explicable but not commendable. Woman's part in our life is so hard and so difficult that she can only act that part when animated by a great and warming faith or, if you prefer, a great illusion. The English woman has lost this faith, and naturally, no longer has the strength to be a woman. But since the race does not tolerate a confession of impotence, this impotence assumes a positive form: feminism

AZUA.—That is absurd. Feminism is not an evasion of woman's functions; it simply asks for a man's functions in addition. It is not impotence, but an excess of vitality.

DEVA.—You know the English expression: You cannot serve two masters. Feminism seeks a man's functions in order that it may abandon the woman's.

. . . . . .

CERDA.—. . . What solution do you propose besides feminism?

DEVA.—We are not here to propose solutions. Here we are, four foreigners, engaged in conversation to pass the time away. We might at least exercise our observation.

CERDA.—Go ahead and observe.

DEVA.—Well, then, I observe that feminism makes no distinction between women who are married and those who are not. It seeks to equalize the rights and duties of the two sexes and to give the woman free sway for her activities, no matter what her civil status may be. And so, all this talk about unmarried mothers and other things of the sort is only—talk. But the movement which inspires this talk springs either from an abjuration of the maternal, in which case it is feminism properly so called (green feminism), or from an abjuration of the feminine, in which case we are dealing with blue feminism, or hominism. The feminist is ashamed of being either a mother or a wife. . . . The English woman avoids maternity, which may add to the wealth of instinct for the masculine part of the race, but it dangerously diminishes the sum-total. . . . The humanization of women brings the feminization of men. English women of today are engaged in cultivating masculine qualities that are incompatible with feminine qualities. The race being a unit, the masculinity of the men is dependent upon the femininity of the women. I may go so far as to predict that the more the English women become masculinized, the more feminized the men will become.

CERDA.—How can you say things like that at a time when the English are giving the world such stirring proofs of masculinity?

DEVA.—I am taking a long shot. The English of whom you are speaking are either men of the world whose wives have not been intellectualized, or men who have inherited their virility from their mothers and grand-mothers of the Victorian era. But look at them a little closer. There is already a minority of Englishmen who are on the road to being feminized. For example: the conscientious objectors.

AZUA.—That's a slander. It would be impossible to find finer examples of heroism than the conscientious objectors, the manner in which they face public contempt and even abuse.

DEVA.—But who says that the feminine type is lacking in courage? There is a masculine courage and a feminine courage, just as there is a masculine and a feminine beauty. . . . Masculine courage is power; feminine courage, resistance. The woman worthy of the name would rather suffer than inflict suffering. That is exactly the intellectual attitude and conduct of the conscientious objector. For me, the conscientious objector is the precursor of the middle-class Englishman of tomorrow, the product-to-be of the increasing intel-

lectualization of women. England, if she is to save herself, must look for fresh vigor in the bosom of her working classes, where woman does not look down upon her own femininity, but remains the man's respectful enemy.

(*Translated by* S. P.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

E Giménez Caballero

E Giménez Caballero, founder and editor of Spain's leading literary newspaper, La Gaceta Literaria, *published at Madrid, is interested in establishing a relation between literature and the public. As a publicist, he adopts methods that are new to the peninsula. As his own article, printed at the head of this section, indicates, he is, also, one of those members of the younger generation who are concerned not only with literature, but "with civic, realistic needs." He is keenly interested in sport and athletics, and many of his books deal with that subject, such as his recent* Hercules jugando a los dados. *He makes frequent lecture tours over Europe, in the course of which he lectures in a number of languages. He is, in short, enthusiastic for "all that is young, vital and athletic in our scene."*

TEXTUAL MEMORANDA

In a café (February 7 p.m.)

A salubrious odor in my eyes.

From out in the street the café moons are like aquarium water.

From out in the street nothing is heard. Everything a motion picture.

From out in the street the man with the violin plays billiards—in spirals—with the ceiling.

From out in the street the man at the piano reconnoiters a white belly, feeling it with the endoscopic fingers and ears of a kidney specialist.

The rings of the music are seen from out in the street. They are smoke-color.

The music smokes. Its rings emerge unrolled like copper cables for basements. But they rise like saints' haloes. Grey and mother of pearl. And when they relax down towards the floor they pause at the level of the intestine and form the small round tables.

That's why all who enter the café seek the tables with the scenting noses of music-dogs, trooping around the tables, building themselves up around the tables, stratifying themselves around the tables.

Small round tables: the amibes of the café. Both violin and piano couple in a corner and the seed runs out and flies and coagulates into seed-colored tables.

A smoky and sexy annelide, the music licks the hands with table-coldness—licks the hands of the patrons, who clap their hands to get over the shock.

The café (seven p.m.) is a monstrous and profound flora. Aquarium.

Around the white nodules—corollas—of the tables, the petals of people.

(Derby hat, and neck-scarf, and neck handkerchief, and fur coat, and neck-tie, and starched cuff, and cap, and sailor hat, and ring, and moustache, and cream-teeth, and cigarette, and tray, and carbonic acid, and No. 9, and sabre, and bread, and stamp, and a total rumor of abysmal tide, a slow, slow motion of 9,000 ft. of ocean, where blossom forth the madrepores and where the sea-weeds dance slow, slow, infinite rumbs.)

From out in the street a salubrious aquarium-smell. The nostrils dilate like free tickets for the show and refuse to leave the show, the show which they cannot smell, except with the eyes, the eyes, expert bell-divers hung from the ladder of the street, submerged under the February moon (a small round table in the sky? And the sky, an ocean?)

Threshold

Only a hole.

A hole in the pupil, the closed pupil, but a metallic hole in the pupil; a tin button in the pupil, tin pain, soft, soft, little by little, a smaller, smaller hole, soft, soft tick-tack of the watch, a decreasing distant thunder watch, stone-hewers dance, oblivion of the feet and black lights; decreasing, decreasing orifice; the orifice is pasted up, all grey, black lights, sole lights; flies of silence file about, thigh-itch, crackling; again tick-tack watch, louder, and the stone-hewers hew, hew; now down below a groove of purple rays in the pupil, but soon new flies of silence, feet, hands, in oblivion; farther away, farther away, a horse, the pupil, green lights; tack, yesterday, today?

My table and she, all grey; a face going away; cross three; this my find horse I like, I like, I like; soft, decreasing, decreasing, decreasing; all eyelid-color, and now nothing.

On a Carnival

The window is an angle pyramid with star and spiral dawn-cold and the orgy within before the universal serenity of the world and the orgy within

there there

There cylinder-shape eye winking billiard-cues which perforate apples of ivory like adamic sins and roll themselves around sentimental intestines polypi of drunkenness and spasmodic serpentines with masks in masks upon bi-color disk disguised as a caduceus upheld by a useless hand most fine and small in a milk-and-moon bubble planisphere of black dreams with sympathy for dice and navels cows dancing like bees and succubes the sex underlined and flying fish-fins linear tails champagneless towards vertical cloths hung from cones and grenades crotchets with bee-hair and flesh foreboding desires of tea pallet-valves and music-mosquitoes pursuing comets with wakes porpoise towards an angular laughter hidden and equidistant from the window

Motor-truck, in urban subconsciousness

The city is at peace, with everybody (mid-afternoon).

The cars ride around handicapped by the decline of day. Reaching the post by a half-neck before shattering the twilight and turning on headlights. The cars, open-eyed, without, as yet, electrical spectacles.

Pupils of empty taxis ride about in concentric spirals, sucking up preys, passers-by. (The glances of the empty taxis upon the crowd, flashes of lark-hunting mirrors and vociferations of ambulance hawkers.)

A star?

Suburb. Train: far-away: where? Useless conglomerates of souls upon the wide sidewalks, souls the color of nankin and smoke. Smell of lubricating oils.

And the trucks go by. *That* truck.

. . . .

The workingmen, huddled on top of it, as in a basket; day's work (eight hours) over. In silence.

Carnival coach? Color of nankin and smoke.

Smell, burnt oil.

Bunches of vague hosts upon the metallic loins of that pachydermous animal (threatening) and grey.

The trucks go by. *That* truck. But nothing goes by.

Oh, yes! Instantaneous (slight) affright of the entire city: of a sudden.

(Truck in an image rent in two. An image rent in two by the subconsciousness of the city.)

Armor plates. Shots. Perspective Nevsky. Impacts upon the boiling engine. Frenzy. Desolation. Dead squares. Sacks and corpses. Spots of oil and blood. Faces of nankin. Faces of smoke. Eyes and claims. Burnt oil. A trumpet in the air. Machine-guns at the street-mouth. (Eight cylinders hitting.) Police. Horses.

This slight coldness, so sudden, throughout the streets of the city!

As though a foreboding should perforate its soul, fleetingly.

But the city at peace with everyone. The trucks go by. *That* truck.

With its proletarian granulation astride, in silence.

Screens

Screens—not because they are screens—but because they are dream-angels.

Screens—not because they are screens—but because of their hypnotic flora, their abstruse micro-life and their schemes without logic.

And screen painters, inn-painters, fish painters. Painters of flowers, painters of hallelujahs and painters of sins.

El Bosco. (Morality in dreams.) Dreams of lizards and butterflies. Bees, heads of hair, marble, putrefaction, fire, meduses, shadows, larvae, sleep-walking, false lights, phalluses, bellies, broken sexes, valves, the unclean smell of cerumen, plague carts, nightmares and geometry; genius?

Who will order from me—you, Quevedo?—a *Resurrexit* by El Bosco, the painter of eternal screens?

Confessional

Sport for the sense of smell, smell of the confessional.

But, my friend, it is not possible to take this smelling as a sport!

Do approach the confessional seriously.

After putting on a blouse, sleeve-protectors, rubber gloves.

And setting up a great ebullition going in the emery-covered sterilizer.

And operate.

First press your cotton, with pincers, over the peripheric pus. And smell it with the gesture of a dentist detecting caries.

Then, dissect. Feel with your fingers. Carve. Sew.

What? There was a little unsuspected infection?

But I told you the confessional was an extremely grave and serious case. Worthy of consultations and analysis by all the masters.

Its etiology is difficult.

The lateral reticulate—no doubt—was the vehicle. There still are printed lips, lividness and scum.

Through the porosity of that reticulate the bacillar hosts sank in.

The intestines of the confessional are scarified with micropsychic impurities.

If Pasteur should get born again and set up his laboratory in the confessional!

Odors of buttocks, of feet, incense, powders, rouge, tobacco, dandruff, cosmetics, urea, cerumen.

And how much anxiety and how much spasm!

Through the rhomboidal wicket, the priest's voice, like a sex, and hers, like another, barrenly seeking each other.

And how much sanies, and how much matter, and how much granulation, and how much indistinct flora of morbidity!

The confessional, its gloomy mouth in the cold corner, its toothless mouth, its ears like nets, its low skirts and, for a head, a cross.

Old man seated on a bench

The leaves seek feet without finding them in the wind which so softly whirls around the leaves in old-fashioned waltzes.

(Tra . . . tra la la ra, tra lal lal lal la-lal lal la-la ra . . .)

And this makes sleepier still the stone of the bench, which takes on the softness of a mattress.

There is no more irruption into the walk save that of a boy with his football.

This stimulus is insufficient by duration and by intensity.

The tram-cars hum with the softness of the wind and raise nostalgias of distant train trips, rocking-chairs, small coughs, milk bottles, nap . . . nap . . .

The whole consciousness becomes concentrated in this furtive periphery, periphery caress, delight, minute, felicity, sleep.

Wind, tram-car, nap.

It is four o'clock in the afternoon. At two minutes after four the

first representation of fatigue shall arrive. And the thread—now broken—of the discontinued rosary of everyday will get strung up again: life-death, death-life, life-death, death-life, life-death.

But it is four o'clock, and two minutes after four is still two minutes off.

The leaves are dancing childhood waltzes.

(Tra . . . tra la la ra . . .)

And the stone has the fresh and tender laxity of a mattress.

And there is an immobile sunlight in the air.

And the tram-cars, milk, swings, trains, light passions, small coughs, sweetness, feast and nap, nap . . .

Eyes like ponds asleep under the sky.

Walking-stick like a bare tree.

Only his hands, tachycardiac, shake without knowing it, while holding the stick.

As though the stick: ineffable nymph—in evidence at the extremity of the wood—and naked, of four o'clock sharp.

Still Life

Twenty bricks, pink packages, exact, in a pile.

There is a newspaper (background). And a dead, opalescent, waxy, spot of lubricating oil.

All upon Portland cement. And a beacon's clarity in the upper part. And a cornered inscription. And a man asleep. And an orange peel. And heat. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 particles of glass. And a childish drawing, scratched with the finger nail, upon the wall.

Black-and-white-Board

1, night	2, dawn
1, water	2, flame
1, shadow	2, angel
1, tear	2, appetite
1, patent leather	2, snow
1, no	2, yes
1, blood	2, wine
1, mercury	2, crystal
1, illness	2, caress
1, tow	2, felt
1, mule	2, sex
1, thorn	2, lily
1, black	2, white.

Two Hands upon Spheres

Nakedness of spheres, balls, naked balls, breasts, naked breasts, worlds, naked worlds, marble.

Cold, to slip away, to prowl, wander, gyrate, gyro-wander in tangents, tangents.

hands.

Fishes upon a Table

Wood-plank, horizontal, humid, silicious, yellow.

Windless beach, pneumatic. Beach hard, distended, solid, empty, square, knotty, bare.

And fishes, like bottles made of fish-scales.

(*Translated by* Victor Llona.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

ENGLAND AND IRELAND

Compiled and Edited,
and with an Introduction

By J. BRONOWSKI

INTRODUCTION

By J. Bronowski

There is a sense in which the categories "pre-war" and "post-war," and the extrinsic division "war," spiritually are still to be established. I think this is a valid sense, although I believe that extrinsic divisions are anterior to, and create, spiritual categories. A change of environment so profound as the war changes deeply the social values and adjustments; but in so far as the change is an inflection of old values, it escapes classification; or, has no spiritual reality. That reality belongs to another change (of which environmental change is perhaps an incident) of the axioms underlying social adjustment. In the war there was this change but it did not have the war for motive force: the war was a phenomenon of it much as was post-war literature. The two are parallel developments. If we regard them as sequent we reduce post-war literature to the war-books, the inflection of a stock-response to become slightly shocking and exciting: and whose use of the war for scene does not differ fundamentally from the use by Galsworthy and Walpole, as an event very like the White City. The White City was not a division; and in that sense the war was not a division. This collection is therefore made in the other sense, in which the war, shaped by the same forces as have shaped contemporary literature, is in parallel with a true division, between what is conditioned by contemporary stresses and what by stresses which are not contemporary; between the contemporary adjustment and the non-contemporary adjustment.

Unfortunately, the post-war scene, at its most modern, is in part so ill-developed that the application of the criterion "contemporary" would distort rather than represent it. Current English and Irish prose has considerably lost touch with the contemporary value, and this is true of the best writing as well as of semi-intelligent (the sense is Stendhal's) and popular writing. The two latter classes are outside the scope of this book; I instance them briefly by the names, for 1910 Walpole, Wells, Galsworthy, for 1930 Charles Morgan, Aldous Huxley, H. M. Tomlinson. The comparison is chastening:

and becomes more so if we add Bennett, Conrad, then Shaw and Granville-Barker to the first list, and J. B. Priestley, Michael Arlen, St. John Ervine, Noel Coward to the second. Clearly "well-bred" literature has since 1920 lost the capacity to be powerful, the confidence that it can have power or importance. What remains is the leader-writing gentility of C. E. Montague, and its succession in David Garnett and Richard Hughes; a minor involution of style in place of force or conviction.

The same phenomenon, of a pre-occupation with style, persists in the best writing, and has there been countenanced, in the disguises of experimental and psychological interest, by the influences of James Joyce and Marcel Proust. These outstanding "human" geniuses of the century have below superficial resemblances the profounder sympathy of an acquiescence, an acceptance of the social environment; if their acquiescence contains an element of intolerance it is a personal, not a social, element. The impulse of their writings as of other romantic writing is an individual friction against the social order, but because they stand in the decline of a romantic period the friction and the consequent protest have become an individual sport; they no longer question, and are in the end part of, the order upon which they are directed. I quote from Joyce—

> That thought is not mine, he said to himself quickly. Patience. Can you say with certitude by whom the soul of your race was bartered and its elect betrayed—by the questioner or by the mocker? Patience.

In Joyce's work there is a rebellion but there is no doubt: no doubt for example of the current view of sin or of obscenity. His work is directly in the Catholic tradition; and to that owes much of its freedom from the contemporary scruples and uncertainties. Joyce has employed the freedom to explore deeply the problems of style, in particular of language. His researches, and the researches of Proust, have had a great and I think evil influence: they are individual achievements, under stresses which are no longer the contemporary stresses; their pre-occupation is not contemporary—that is a statement which I am about to discuss in detail; finally the character of leisured and needy gentlewomanliness which their influence has given to much English prose (it is present in this collection) will not be easily lived down, for even writers so strong as T. F. Powys and Wyndham Lewis have not altogether escaped from it.

The pre-occupation with style and with words I hold to be not contemporary because its significance depends upon a view of words as the medium and fundamental symbols of literature. Words are symbols for things, for actions, sensations, events—call that group "objects": and these again are conditioned by and symbolise, by means of a connection or notation usually called morality, the impulses within the fictitious world created by the work of art. So the printed words of a novel symbolise the thoughts and actions of its characters; which in turn are adjustments to and symbolise stresses between the characters and their world, directed by the morality obtaining in that world. I have called this a fictitious world, but it is a picture of a real world; and when the morality of the real world is stable all such pictures have moralities much the same as, at least contiguous to, that morality. At such a time the relation between "object" and "environment," between murder and jealousy for example, is a constant relation which writer and reader accept without exploration: and the accent in the work of art therefore falls upon the exploration of the second relation, between "word" and "object." This is the accent in the work of Joyce. On the other hand at a time of moral instability the relation between object and environment, between murder and jealousy, is not constant; it becomes the business of the artist to create this relation, which before he could posit; and he is compelled to be pre-occupied with the task of explaining the relation. Roughly, there no longer exists one criterion by which the motives of the characters may be judged immediately to be sufficient, their actions natural in them or unnatural. The artist must create out of actions a world whose morality or criteria for action the reader is persuaded to accept, and by which he can judge subsequent action to be consistent. And the persuasion requires at such a time an incessant application to the problem of finding recognizable actions, recognizable "objects," symbols adequate to the artist's moral meaning. This is an artistic problem, and a great and isolated artist like Ibsen spent his life upon it, but because it is a problem concerned with moral meanings he is considered a moralist and his art is neglected. Since the forces which conditioned the war and post-war literature were forces of moral flux, this is what I hold to be the contemporary problem; and therefore it is with concern that I see Ibsen's fate still threatening another great artist, D. H. Lawrence.

The work of D. H. Lawrence, particularly the change in his work, may be taken to orientate the post-war period. Lawrence's achieve-

ment before 1917 is of the order of his *Sons and Lovers,* the considerable achievement of a "human" genius of the type, though not the stature, of Proust and Joyce. A restlessness, a grudging in acquiescence, robs it of the timeless quality of these two colossal writers in whom the human has become the superhuman without having in any way reached a plane out of the human. But at that time Lawrence's work was unique and it is remarkable that it should then have undergone a fundamental change and become more genuinely contemporary than the work of younger writers. The change made in 1917 with *The Rainbow* is to writing which has lost the element of personal and indeed of human protest and has become the secession of a social conscience. Therefore it struggles, more consciously as it matures, for a moral symbolism: and it is this struggle which underlies the extravagances of *The Plumed Serpent* and *The Woman Who Rode Away* (I recall "And utterly, utterly indoors"), the structure of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (the gamekeeper for example is a constant symbol with Lawrence), and which comes nearest to peace in the poems *Birds, Beasts and Flowers.* In Lawrence that contemporary struggle is complicated by the residues of a "human" preoccupation, the pre-occupation of early work like *The Trespasser,* with the direct expression of emotional states. And his peace is impermanent and often undignified: nevertheless it has an intensity—

> "Funny old Mother!" he said. "I never realized before that she was the mother of my shoulders and my hips, as well as of my brain. Mother of my thighs!" He switched off some of the lights as he went——

which Joyce's acceptance of a symbolism—

> Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead——

falls short of. Lawrence was a romantic who was not oppressed by the decline of romanticism; he did not have so receptive and universal, so fatalistic a mind as Proust and as Joyce. He writes therefore as if from the beginning of a romantic period, with the proselytising vigour of Balzac. And it is characteristic of English prose today that his influence has been small and Proust's large: a hundred years ago in France Stendhal and Balzac reversed that order. A writer may yet fuse with the rich mother-liquor of Joyce's prose

that social intensity which in Lawrence was infinitely fertile. He would require a romantic genius; Joyce's writing, and Proust's more personally, call for a human exploitation impossible to classical thought. Perhaps for that reason graftings which have appeared are not promising.

This is not true of current poetry: there the technical adaptation should fertilise what is already today the richer field. Its harvest, like that of prose, grows from the same seed as did the war. Immediately before the war the important movement in English prose was Imagism, a technique prompted by the historical sense, that is, by the search for a reaction to the modern environment continuous with the classical reaction to its environment. Some failures in this search gave, in the work of Ezra Pound and of the Fugitives, a tentative redirection to it; and the war and the reaction against a preciousness of temper in Imagism stabilised this, the "cynical deterioration" of the historical sense, so that it became the motive force of post-war poetry. Roughly, its method is by contrast of the modern situation with the classical: I quote from T. S. Eliot—

> The host with someone indistinct
> Converses at the door apart,
> The nightingales are singing near
> The Convent of the Sacred Heart.

Because the best-known applications, Eliot's *Sweeney* poems and Pound's *Cantos* have a cynical bias, I call the method as a whole the cynical deterioration; but its applications may be as different in tone as those represented in this collection by McDiarmid, Owens and Taylor. Critical research has consolidated the method, partly because criticism has been considerably directed by poets who practised it, upon examples in Chinese poetry and in Elizabethan and metaphysical poetry and the poetry of Gongora. All these influences have been valuable in enriching the symbolism of individual poets: and the importance of the historical method as a whole has grown out of its anticipation of the contemporary search for such symbolisms. Contrast the prophetic success of W. B. Yeats—

> Barach, the traitor comes,
> And that great king Hell first took hold upon
> When he killed the Naisi and broke Deirdre's heart,
> And all their heads are twisted to one side,

> For when they lived they warred on beauty and peace
> With obstinate, crafty, sidelong bitterness.
> (Crouch down, old heron, out of the blind storm)—

with the failure, akin to Strindberg's, of the considerable poetic sensibility of Walter de la Mare whom his inability to find a significant symbolism has reduced to the charade-childishness of *Peacock Pie.* The successful positions which a number of modern poets, insulated by the flux of morality, have built for themselves, have all been founded on the historical method, except Laura Riding's and Roy Campbell's. In England, under the influence of T. S. Eliot, only the cynical deterioration of the method has been explored, and therefore the method is often looked upon as a refuge: for as Eliot's recent work shows, the cynical deterioration is impermanent but there is no development out of it. Certain of its adjuncts, an obscurity originally of the nature of wit, a formal interest, and an enrichment by allusion and conscious ambiguity, are characteristic of the modern mind and have helped to extend the life of the deterioration. Also it has been assumed that with the cynical deterioration the historical method as a whole must die, and be replaced by an independent system, as in Eliot's devotional poetry. I regard the poem which puts an alternative, Richard Aldington's *Dream in the Luxembourg,* as a work of importance to English poetry. The poem goes back to the primary historical method and is an original development of that; it is sufficiently close to the main stream of modern poetry to be directive, and exciting enough to make the direction attractive. In Irish poetry there is a direction given by Joyce, for example in the later work of Beckett: Joyce's is a lyric and articulate influence to which Irish poetry is susceptible. The new work of Yeats, in *The Tower,* is among his best, but because it takes for method the cynical deterioration which is little understood in Ireland it is not influential. I think that the historical method will only be imported into Ireland by some lyric impetus like that of the early Pound.

Yeats and Pound are outside the scope of this collection, but they are the Olympian figures of contemporary poetry; with them can only be associated Eliot, probably the most genuinely contemporary, the undeformed intelligence of the generation. His writing takes for basis some at least of the social acquiescence of Joyce's: since its concern is however not social but universal, the classical concern, there is a very different manifestation. There is for example a much greater concern with objective symbolism than with verbal variety;

and this concern has lately tended to be mistaken, as was Lawrence's, for a moral, here a religious, concern. These two are not the same thing and their confusion vitiates criticism. It is to be regretted that Eliot has himself encouraged the confusion by his later criticisms, which can only be said to wear the disguise of literary criticism. It was considerably his influence which re-established literary criticism, a subject I regard as wholly post-war, for the pre-war generation is out of touch with it and though its beginnings were made by I. A. Richards it is a younger generation which is making it important. In Ireland the interest in criticism is very recent, yet some of the best criticism I have seen is by the Irish contributors to the examination of Joyce's *Work in Progress* published two years ago. Its doctrinaire use by Ramon Fernandez, to some extent by Herbert Read and lately by Eliot, may discredit it: the influence of Richards, of his view of criticism as a process of extending the availability of reactions, roughly of "teaching" appreciation, encourages that use: and Richards's influence also encourages two suspect pre-occupations, the psychological and the textual. The function of criticism is to appraise and to categorise; often we may not like the categorising intelligence but it remains nevertheless the critical intelligence and criticism is the application of that intelligence. Today even when the categorising function is understood it is treated dubiously because criticism is without objective categories and (it is the psychological influence) is afraid to establish them, for fear that they may turn out to be not perfectly "accurate" in their divisions. But a category is designed not as law but as practical convenience, an economy in language: the categories of Matthew Arnold—

> that poetry is at bottom a criticism of life; that the greatness of a poet lies in his *powerful* and *beautiful* application of ideas to life——

were definite without being final or even precise; they saved unnecessary elaboration, both of points in the text and of critical comment. Criticism today is not likely to gain much ground so long as its vocabulary is confined to— I quote from Eliot—

> Such distinctions are constantly drawn, but are often drawn when they should not be, as well as ignored when they should be. Modern verse is often associated where it is different, and distinguished where it is the same. People may think they like the form because they like the content, or think they like the

> content because they like the form. In the perfect poem these fit and are the same thing; and in another sense they are always the same thing. So it is always true to say that the form and the content are the same thing, and always true to say they are different things.

The content here is valuable but the form is inadequate to it, and the content is impoverished by the inadequacy. In this respect the influence of Richards is good: and better still might be the influence of the powerful and courageous criticism of Wyndham Lewis.

But I notice I have come upon practical questions of style; and for practical reasons they are outside this introduction. If I had been able to collect the writings of individual writers whose work I admire, it would have been permissible to analyze them as well as to judge. But no anthologist can represent individual writers, because they are his friends and his enemies and have copyrights and a set of interests in their work which are seldom literary but always trying. Therefore I set myself from the beginning to use another representation, to put a number of writers into a group and to consider the group represented when one of its members was included. The merit of the method is not simply that it represents movements, but that one of six writers will not invent difficulties and five will. It is economical: the English poets in this section complement the Irish, the criticism deals with unavoidable omissions and so on: briefly, I have been concerned to keep the English and Irish post-war *scene* intact and the restriction to English and Irish post-war *writers* has seemed to me less important. The principle is fundamental to this section and I repeat it: that the more the reader will study the section the more he will find it to represent every considerable phase of post-war writing, but to do so with a minimum of attention to the reputations and personalities, often even to the excellences, of post-war writers. My justification is the practical one as well as that contained in the first paragraph of this Introduction. Since as I say I was less interested in writers and the restrictions on writing than in writing, I wanted to represent original sources, to include the work of Pound, translations of Proust, translations from the Chinese. Reasons have been given me which I find adequate, though I do not respect them, against this course; these influences are therefore represented, not by examples, but by what I consider to be equivalents. For help with these and other practical considerations I am indebted to S. B. Beckett, H.D., C. W. Dorrell, T. S. Eliot, Thomas

McGreevey, Samuel Putnam, Laura Riding, J. M. Reeves, Edward W. Titus.

J. BRONOWSKI.

Lautaret-en-Hautes-Alpes
August 1930

Lyle Donaghy

Lyle Donaghy is a young Irish poet now working in London. His writing has a considerable lyric force, and is modern in the best sense, of being a redirection and a vitalising of the Irish lyric tradition. He has privately published three small books, parts of a long poem The Silver Bough. *His more recent work has appeared in* The Criterion, transition, *and* The Dublin Magazine. *It is marked by great rhythmic interest and richness.*

GOING TO THE WAR

O, heart, full of uninventoried wisdom, not a part of which can
be valued,
heart, deeper than the basins in which leviathan can move with
grace,
heart littler than the secret arbutus flowers of her love,
tell me, heart, I being commited to an old tradition of war,
do you gather of destruction an illustrious bloom, with quiet over
the helmeted head?
do you collect any echoes that fairly requite stretched silences?
do you impound the unapprehended things and put them against
the loss?
O, heart, beyond my bidding, let them reach her, as, from flowers,
winding scent,
arisen from your deep, the uncommanded music in the song.

HEIR

I am weary of the ground the rubbings of the body reach daily,
where the corpse is poured;
barely the river wilderness and the shore, immediate upon ebb, are
virgin,
wanting that meteor sand supplied them.

There are moments when I could wash out everything, the fields,
the roads, the house my father built,
everything but the landscape he was first to see.

From behind the ridge the largest of the year's moons glides upward,
I hardly understood it, shining through the planted trees—
but, now that it comes upon the line of the hill, I am pulled, slanting, towards it.

I, the sky, the hill, moon of celandine, and long low clouds;
these are the first deepmost stratum of my heredity,
station of living calm—
I dive through the eliminating night.

TRUCE

Till to-day that wind is wanting
the wild and sown had struggled in close grips
betwixt the mountains and the sea.
Autumn and Winter they'd taken step for step,
rebutted stratagem with stratagem;
by Spring the margin of their strife had heaved around the low slopes of the hills,
and Summer found them in a stranglehold.

But, now, hay harvest's over, and the fields all water-green;
year-weary the ploughman forbears to requisition more ground,
or tend his sown,
simply awaiting yield—
not till the new stubble is difficult under the feet, the share may take, in the glebe, its steadier cormorant passage,
and arrive glittering.

Peace is about the foothills; thereabout the fluctuant marches rest,
and, there, ubiquitous gorse, the champion of the wild, allays with rank that eye he almost closes;
at his back the reds of heather and moss show tawnier;
no tuber or straw moves further.

Peace has happened between the wild and sown—

Wind wakes; a seed is blown—

O, heart, needs the emblem resurge, still, unconditionally?
(The heart, militant, accepts.)

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Kathleen Coyle

Kathleen Coyle is an Irish novelist living in Paris. Her writing, low in key but of a cumulative power, penetrates deeply into the psychological intensities of suffering; but it is not pessimistic writing. Her best-known novel is A Flock of Birds; *others are* It is Better to Tell, Youth in the Saddle, *and most recently* Liv.

THE LIMIT

At the back of the Maloney's house in Rathfarnham there was a small walled garden, very sheltered so that flowers lasted late in it.

On an early December day Teresa Maloney was sitting there in a wicker chair furnished with faded cretonne. She was a smallish woman and, wrapped in the old motoring coat that she had put on against the cold, she looked smaller than she really was. It was a very shabby coat with a rubbed leather lining. From the upturned collar her broad pale face looked like a flower—like one of the pale winter chrysanthemums rising out of brown leaves in the bed of earth beside her. Her black, oily looking hair ran away from a parting in broad waves, down over her ears. On the temples were two important splashes of white hair oddly resembling surf, as though the waves had truly broken there. Her eyebrows were thick and black and her eyes blue, blue and set wide. There was a little crooked bump on her nose and her left eye-tooth came down longer than the others and always showed between her shut lips. There was something fantastic, an always secretly amused expression in her mouth and eyes. She was sewing, holding up the corner of a piece of coarse material like tea-towelling in her tense tiny hands. Curled up on her feet, which were raised on a footstool, was a black and white cat.

It was tranquil in the garden. The air was bright and cold, but

not too cold. It was perhaps half past twelve, and far away, beyond the sensation of coldness and brightness, there was a sense of food being cooked. Her husband came out from the house and down the path towards her. She saw clearly in the pure light how his red hair was turning golden. She thought he looked far too thin for his height. He stooped to kiss her. When his lips came close to her mouth she dropped her head suddenly so that his kiss came on her forehead.

"My throat aches," she said, holding her head away from him with an unexpected stiff gesture. She put her hand out, the hand with the thimble on and with her sewing finger pushed a snail off the wall behind the chrysanthemums. She had an air of not knowing what she was doing when she pushed the snail and her thimbled finger stayed on the wall where the snail had been.

"Throat! Better take care," he burred.

"It doesn't ache much, exactly, but it's queer, it's . . ." She brought her hand down from the wall and looked at him with direct distraught eyes. "It feels choky . . ." Quickly she gripped his hand and held it and her face went suddenly flushed under its pallor. She looked, in a minute, all gone to pieces. "Oh! Jimmy!" Mad as lightning she whipped the handkerchief that was showing out of his coat pocket and held it against her lips. She held it there and it became red.

"My God, Tease!" He stood there, helpless, doing nothing, struck with horror, watching her effort to get rid of the blood. "Bridget! Bridget!" he called at the top of his voice. He took the handkerchief and turned it and wiped his wife's mouth. "Bring a glass of cold water, Bridget, quick, and run for Doctor Halloran, cold water! Tease! what can it be?" He had an idea and showed it: "An abcess maybe; it's been gathering, and now it's broken."

She lay with her head back in the deep collar and her eyes closed. She continued to press the handkerchief against her mouth and wipe it.

The old woman came with the water. Teresa made a sign with her hand that she needed another handkerchief. Bridget went back to the house to get it. They waited without speaking, and almost motionless, for her return. Opening her eyes Tease saw the piece of stuff that she had been sewing. Neither it nor the cat had moved. She let the handkerchief drop on the ground and held the material against her mouth. The blood seemed to have ceased to come.

"Does it still pain you?"

She shook her head. Something impatient came into the motion of her hand.

"It was an abcess . . ."

Bridget was there again. "Shall I go for the doctor ma'am?"

She shook her head feebly, and the impatience showed again.

"I told you to go. You must go."

"No, Jimmy."

"Yes dear, it's better. He'll give you a gargle."

Bridget ran up the path.

"Listen Tease, if it has stopped now, I'd like to carry you in. It's cold here. You've caught cold."

In an instant she opened her eyes and read him through. Her eyes went misty against him and she put her hand out on his arm to show that she was willing to be carried. He picked her up easily and one saw that he was strong and muscular under his thinness and that it was no effort. He carried her up the garden and into the warm kitchen where there was a smell of roasting meat. A bright red glow of heat shone from the kitchener.

"There! It's warm here, sit in Bridget's chair for a minute." He put her down on the windsor chair. "Do you want to get rid of your coat?" She nodded. He stooped and unbuttoned it and peeled it down off her like a shell. She became visible, neat and intact, like a tiny kernel. "Has it stopped?"

She wiped her lips thoroughly and let the piece of stuff fall out of her hand. "Yes." Her voice was terribly low. "I'd like some water." He got it for her. She stood up with the glass of water in her hand and went over to the sink and spat into an empty bowl. "It is finished, Jimmy . . . will you throw this out in the garden?" She gave him the bowl.

When he came back she was again sitting in the chair. "It was queer, Jimmy, hardly a pain at all, a sensation. It is over now. I am glad that it is over." She rubbed her face against his sleeve.

"You must take care, Tease. The doctor's sure to make you all right." In the silence, vegetables boiled in a saucepan and the roast spat in the oven.

"I feel so odd about it. I do not want to have the doctor."

"I know, darling, but it's better. It's better to be sure, to be careful. You've nothing to be frightened about."

She looked truly frightened when he said that. She put her hand into his. It was very tight and tense and felt like a knot in his until he closed over it. "It's not the doctor, Jimmy . . . it's the blood.

Do you know, it terrifies me! If it wasn't so . . . so red. It's so red on the white." Suddenly she buried her face. "Burn that stuff, Jimmy, burn it!"

"I won't burn it. It'll make a smell. See . . . I'll put it away, I'll take it out. You won't see it any more."

He came back directly and put his arm around her. The cat was mewing at the door. Neither of them heeded it.

"Jimmy!"

"Yes."

"I feel we ought to look at Bridget's roast. It may be burning to death."

He went down on his hunkers to open the oven door. "What must I do to it?"

"Baste it. Take a spoon and pour the gravy over it. Look! There's the spoon on the table that Bridget's been using."

He was basting it when Bridget came in. "The doctor won't be back till after lunch. They've promised to send him round before he takes the patients. He'll come immediately."

Tease sat at the luncheon table eating nothing. Jimmy ate heartily with an air of making little of the present anxiety and of being full of spirits. He told her all about a new case he had, a will case with a very interesting psychology. When it came near the time for the doctor's visit she begged him not to wait. She wanted him to return to his office early. He refused her.

She became direct: "I don't want you to be there. I want to be alone with him."

"Righto! You shall be alone with him. I'll go down the garden and pick worms. But I must know what he says."

He was there, fidgeting with the chrysanthemums, his thin fingers moving amidst the blooms that were not much bigger than Michaelmas daisies, when Doctor Halloran found him.

"Well, George!" They had known each other for years.

"She hasn't been well lately?"

"Well as anything until to-day. This was quite sudden. It happened like that!" He snapped his fingers.

"But she hasn't been herself?"

"Oh I think so! Not so lively, perhaps." She had, when he came to think about it, been sitting about rather much.

"Well, Jimmy, I have not told her, but . . . it's cancer, and I'm not quite sure if we can operate." He plucked a flower and concentrated on it, avoiding Jimmy's eyes.

"My God, Tease!"

Everything was said in the silence.

"There is just a chance that we can operate. I must make sure. I'd like Galbraith to see her."

"Yes. You haven't told her . . . ?"

"Of course not! She mustn't even guess. You must pretend that it's nothing. Be as cheerful as you can. Don't let her see."

"My God! Good God! George . . . Tease!"

. . . . . .

During the next three nights Teresa did not sleep well. She tossed about terribly. On the morning of the fourth day she said to her husband that she would like to sleep alone. So that night Jimmy slept on a stretcher bed beside her. He slept soundly and when he woke in the morning she was asleep and he dressed quietly without waking her. She woke when he was putting on his collar in front of the mirror, with his back to her. The sleep slipped out of her eyes as she became aware of him and the "laughing secretly" expression seemed to leap in her face as she took in the absurdity of his tall lanky form with the braces crossed on his bulging shirt and his collar standing out in great flaps up to his ears. He pulled it forward and fastened it and then suddenly she screamed and the flaps leapt up again. He turned to her.

"Jimmy! Look, look! Oh, hide it quick, hide it!" She was showing him a large red stain on the turned back sheet: " . . . and on the pillow too! It must have been while I slept. Hide it! Hide it!"

. . . . . .

The hemorrhage recurred during the morning. The doctor came and ordered her to stay in bed all day. Bridget changed the sheets and the pillow slips. In the afternoon there was another hemorrhage which came with such suddenness that the clean sheets were stained before she could prevent it. Bridget telephoned to Jimmy and he came home at once.

She was sitting up against the pillows when he entered, smiling at him as though she had really seen him coming down the road and had been waiting to greet him. He went over and sat down beside her on the bed with his arm around her.

It was tranquil in the room, with gleams of firelight. The window was open a little top and bottom. Outside, a troop of sparrows were shouting with rasped throats for bread and circuses. Her voice

seemed very low and harmonious in comparison. "I'm glad you're there . . . it makes me afraid . . ."

"Don't mind it Tease, don't mind it! You'll be all right presently."

His great hand which seemed all metacarpal bones was entwined in her two small ones. "If I didn't see it, Jimmy . . ." She looked up at him, the tiny white spot of her exposed eye-tooth was shining and there was a fantastic mirth in her eyes. "Couldn't you get me red-as-scarlet sheets and then, you see, I should be made whiter than snow?"

He took her quite seriously: "Why, of course. I'll go down to Parry's at once and get him to make you some."

"He'll take months. You know what Parry is. He'll have the lambs shorn specially and specially dyed . . . dyed in the blood of the lamb. . . . Oh, Jimmy, do laugh! You must laugh!"

"Tease! Tease!" His arm tightened round her shoulders. They were quiet in the firelight together, waiting. Waiting.

"I've got a splendid idea. We can have scarlet tops made, half the depth of the sheet. . . . I couldn't bleed enough to reach to the foot of the bed . . ."

He got up with a jerk and strode to the door. "Bridget! Bridget!" He came back in a second, quite calm, smiling at her.

"What do you want Bridget for?"

"I'd like a cup of tea."

"At three o'clock?"

"Well, it isn't every day that I'm home at three. Can't I have a cup of tea in my own house . . . at three o'clock?"

"Why, of course! You may even have two cups of tea, three! Three at three o'clock!"

. . . . . .

They decided to operate. Jimmy had the sheets done at Parry's and brought them home himself with half a dozen silk pillow slips. She was like an excited child for whom a party had been made, when she was decked out in them, wearing an old Chinese red dressing-gown that had been long ago discarded. She sat up straight and gay against the pillows, laughing at Jimmy: "Oh! How very gruff your voice is, Grandmother, and what great hands you've got!"

. . . . . .

They operated. Jimmy saw her coming out of the ether. She was in agony and she looked at him as if she knew everything and how

it was all going to end and it was no good. The nurse saw how unbearable it was to him and put him out of the room. "She is not quite conscious. They are always like that. It is the ether. She will be better after she has slept."

He saw her again asleep. She was strangely quiet to him, not moaning any longer. Her face was sharply cut out against the red pillows, deepened into them by the shadow of her hair, her deep black hair with the white splashes like the breast of a bird. She lay like a bird when it falls in the frost. . . .

. . . . .

She could not bear the nurse so they had to send her away and have a daily one who came in whenever her throat needed dressing.

There were no more hemorrhages but she had begun to suffer a great deal. At first it was the after-pain of the operation, but as the weeks went on, the pain grew instead of lessening.

Jimmy lay every night in the stretcher beside her and gradually he began to hear her moaning. He slept at first because she moaned very quietly so as not to waken him. But the pain became stronger than her will and in the end she moaned without caring whether it was loud or not. She did not know. He would spend hours trying to soothe her.

George Halloran said that they would have to give her morphia.

"That means that she is going to die?"

"She will suffer less."

She did not suffer less.

It was the limit one night when she said,—he was sitting on her bed with half of her in his arms—"I'd rather the bleeding came back."

He told George.

"It will come back."

"Then the pain will go?"

"You never can tell."

Seven weeks after the operation she had a crisis. It was terrible to witness. Dawn found Jimmy torn and unnerved, a rag of a man keeping vigil. The morphia had failed. The truth was that she had enough to kill her. And then, quite suddenly, she slept. It seemed incredible to Jimmy. He leaned over and touched her cheek with his finger and when he took his finger away it was red. He drew himself back stiffly, afraid of making a blunder, even with his breath, that might wake her. He tip-toed out of the room.

. . . . .

Bridget caught him on the bottom stair. "You must have a cup of tea, sir."

He shook his head. His eyes were wild, and he kept wiping his mouth. "She's asleep. For God's sake don't wake her! Don't make a sound, I warn you. You'd better shut up the cat. Is the cat shut up?"

"Yes. Yes. The cat's safe."

He went to the front door and opened it noiselessly.

Bridget crept after him: "You're not surely going out?"

He waved her away, into oblivion, with his hand.

"But you can't, it's raining, it's raining like mad."

He paid no attention. He went out of the door, on to the step sideways, like an escaping thief.

"Here . . ." she ran after him in her slippers and thrust an umbrella into his hand. "You'll be drenched to the bone. Take this." She waited until he took it and then turned in out of the rain. She had a glimpse of him, fumbling over the gate latch, the umbrella still unopened, before she shut the door.

. . . . . .

He turned down the road and went past George Halloran's darkened windows, past the house where the crazy countess lived, and crossed over by the district grocer's. Round the corner from the grocer's a couple of boys were unpacking a crate of eggs. They stopped when they saw him:

"Oh Holy suffering Wilduck look at the zany!"

"Hold it up higher, mister!"

"Tie your handkerchief on it!"

"Hit me with it!"

He stopped before them, arrested. A mixture of pain and consciousness filled into his expression. His wild eyes came to rest in this misery, and then he strode on.

"Oh, Cheeses! The sun'll blind you, mister! Pull it down across your eyes. Oh, Cheeses!"

He went on from them, steadily, heedless. He met an old woman in a cape that was put on over her bonnet and came down to her ankles. She stopped right in front of him, and from somewhere in her bosom she moved fat agitated red fingers. "My poor man, is it crazy you are, or is it drink?"

"No! No! It's my wife, ma'am . . . she is dying of cancer." He moved round her and she moved with him.

"But all the same now," she reasoned, "you could open that umbrella and not hold it up so ridiculously. Man dear, you'd think it was a flagstaff you were carrying. Open it, you'll be soaked to the skin."

"That is a thing that I do not intend to do. I am going to hold it up like this . . ." he held it higher, "to be jeered and mocked at and spat upon, as an act of sacrifice to God to beseech him to have pity on my wife . . . she is in torment . . ."

"Holy Mary! Holy Mother of God!" She stood looking after him with fingers moving like coarse red flowers in her bosom.

The traffic thickened as he approached Portobello Bridge. People stared and some of them stopped but he got away from them into the scurrying line going across the bridge. The Liffey ran fast with the wind, thickened and muddy and full of drift. On one of the quays men were busy unloading a string of barges packed with turf that had come down from the mountains. The turf resembled great dark brown woolly caterpillars at the edge of the turbulent yellow water. Over the bridge the pavement was diminished by the market stalls, which had begun to put out their provisions and were already thronged with early morning customers. Jimmy got jammed in the crowd. He escaped notice amidst the welter of other, opened, umbrellas. A motor lorry came rattling down the street with such speed and force that, when it reached the narrow part, the people against the provision stores and the open booths were welded into one mass. Jimmy was pushed up close against the stomach of a fat woman. "Go easy!" she yelled at him.

He could not go easy for he was powerless to move backwards or forwards. And then, suddenly, from somewhere between Jimmy and the fat woman and their tight neighbours a cauliflower emerged.

"Is it stealing my cauliflower you are?"

"Cauliflower!" Jimmy repeated.

"Oh! He's going to hit me!"

"Put down the umbrella!"

"I cannot put it down. I am doing this for my wife who is . . ."

"Put down the umbrella."

The lorry was past, and the mass of marketers loosened. The bodies of the women rippled away from Jimmy as though he had been a stone flung in the midst of them.

"He's mad!"

"I'm not mad . . ."

"He took the cauliflower out of my bag."

A newspaper-boy had stopped on his bicycle at the kerb and a big burly policeman was bearing down upon them.

"Here, you get along out of this, Mister!"

Jimmy stepped out into space. He raised the umbrella as high as it could go, and standing out in the cleared circle he declared: "I am doing this for my wife . . ."

"Here! You get out of this, Mister. Get along home!"

"This is good enough for a stop-press!"

"Pardon me," said a white-haired old man with a gentle air, "allow me!" He put a hand on Jimmy's shoulder as one might touch a child who had strayed, "where do you want to go to? I'll take you there? I shall be very glad to accompany you."

Jimmy stared at him, wild and bewildered. "Yes, you are quite right. I must go home. I must go home to my wife who is dying of cancer. She is dying of cancer, I tell you. Dying. You cannot conceive the extent of her suffering . . ."

The gentle old man directed him firmly towards a small grey Ford and practically pushed him into it. "Where do you live?"

Jimmy gave him the address; then he stood up in the car and waved the umbrella at the crowd that had gathered and gathered and become a blur of umbrellas, spreading like gigantic wet leaves over curious queerly lit faces: "I am doing this for my wife who is dying of . . ." the car moved off, Jimmy's last word was a shriek: . . . "CANCER!"

. . . . .

"Yes," said Bridget, "she's still asleep."

"There's, I think, a taxi . . ." he made a vague gesture, "will you pay the man?"

Tease was lying as he had left her. Daylight shone in two parallel lines across the room escaping from between the narrow blind and the window frame.

He went down on his knees: "I thank you, God. I thank you, God!"

She was lying so very still, fixed like wax into the scarlet, whiter than snow against the scarlet and her sleep was deep. . . .

(Courtesy of the Author and of *This Quarter.*)

Philip Owens

Philip Owens is one of the few English poets who have introduced neologisms into their verse. His poetry has a vigour that goes deeper than its surface gusto. He has also published a prose book, Hobohemians: *and a play in verse,* Marlowe. *He was a contributor to* transition *and to* The London Aphrodite.

From a dream of clouds

at night upon an inner sky
sleawardbleating cloudsome frigatears
crystal sail and icy mast tore by.

manned by baldheaded parvenus
Cirrus Cirrum Cirrulus and Co?

no those are ancient nobles emigrés
once held in fief misty Reticulum in Lenticulia
kicked out whattime the sansculottish winds swept round their sky.

one fell to business . Cyrus Lenticulate
barebackboned Cyrus now the Mackerel of Mackerel
started as grocers boy, sand sugar tea
peas lentilled split pease yellow lentils green
slabbed up weighed in wrapped out pease pudding damp
buy a bowlful of our best budding
bowl neighbour bowl bursting with bright bease budding
slabbing up wrapping out thankyoumums.
Cyrus went on a cookstour acquired
concessions in puree de pois
bought up each Erbsen Suppe kitchen Farewell to Aschinger

Kellner eine Suppe
ein Glas helles Bier
porcotobacco I am hungry.

he king became of the peas
cornered the peas through all the peabearing podlands
the old tsar of the lentils
but he grew wearywallow of that grassgreen vegetable
and swam off one equinox collaring the scales of the deep-sea
wrigglers

selling them as tonwise sequin
tanking them round with the weeds of the sargossa
turning the scales of the universe markets
expired.

sexpired in accordance with will late magnate
three continent swampings of pea cods
to be monumented by Pericarp de Codpease
as memorial Cyrus Lenticulate.

he was descended they say out of Clod earl of Kant
with a pickup from Clude thane of Sussex
allied on his ma's side with the Manchester Cluddys
heard tell that Cloyd a hoarrunner blew over with William.

don't care a peck for his family breeze
tell us what others tore by.

O
curlcloud with a Taifun from over the water
twentyone guns at sea salute of nineteen on land,
on a dithyramb of rain small scud fishyeyed,
high fingerprints of stardusty masons
digital-limed building the zenith
nigh fingerprints of racketeer titans
rifling Eolus treasury and dawnsurprised.

went out in that shower garden
picked vapoury flowers white flowers light flowers
small ladysmock

now why shouldn't a poet
have a model to pose like a painter
so much an hour
sit there let the light fall turn leftwards
have beautiful women in barely chemises
some of them nude
so note down his sonneting portraits
film stars in smocks
now madam turn round
take off that air lingerie

horizonblown dandelion clocks waterlilies
dawndripping nadirflung convolvulus.

made a bouquet
lathered that evening in the shave of the sunset
vapoury flowers red flowers bed flowers
amaryllis dead fuschia clematis and hemisphere creeper
bachelors button cranesbill on Godshill alls well with the forceps.
winter lantern and scilla.

it was a gala day
levy and muster of spume
gang and cluster of sud
squad and loudburst of bubble
of spindrift a kennel and trouble
a rick and a stook of marestail
cats and dogs of a batch of dwarf nimbus
blizzard and squall of skynancial dishonor
a flatus of greenfly with windscreen abduction
of locusts and starlings a shade under awning
assemblage of care killed the cat and no thunder
eisteddfod of tobacco wreathing a nation
posse comitatus of simoon
a budget of cyclone
a covey and concourse of mistral
compilation and dissipation of minor poets in a galeblast of taxes
flustering blustering lustering petticoat breezes.

ingathering and congregation of pillars of cloud by day
of woolpack that being regarded ruins the reaper
of witnesses a quiet hebrew cloud
those that little as mens hands came out from the sea.

cloud used by Christ in ascending with others almost like new
having borne in their days various biblical prophets vanishing
seen and unseen of disciples

clouds that darkened the turrets of Troy
hid the sunlight a moment from doorwell of strange Pasiphae
stayed still in Iran while odorous poets made out the rigvedas
allnighted the campfires of Tartars asleep in the lionloud plains
seen the lanternhung ships of the buddhists afloat to the three eastern islands

a coppergreen cloud that had flourished with midnight magician

a peculiar cloud encountered by histlyric poet
in the springrhyme of nineteenrainteen
and done into english werse by Samiel Souwester
illustrated by Noblody Good
typhonography deranged by the Great Tycoon
binding by Drift and Suns
printed under the seasonal supervision of A. Föhn.

of this cloud a seadition of 365 copies has been printed on Luke Howard frantique wove vaper menstrually watermarked and handset in Maculosus type 2pt. to N bound in half oasis sirocca also 12 copies al fresco on Saturate Veldt with shagreen finish by Welkin and Wolcen each copy justified by a fingerprint of the author. printed at the Navigator Prest and landlublished by Patlow and Windus.

some clouds megaphoned what they were.

—a huswife missed me in Natal day Wanamaker discovered
The CUSTOMER is always in the RIGHT

—Hellespontnimbus above wavethrashing Xerxes

—a wandering clod at the time it was first formulated
a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush

—me too a downpour in Moscow the morn
cabinboys drank the last homebrew on the Santa Maria

—Pontius Pilate washed his hands in me

—I once the double aspirate oh in the mouth of a girl
ruined regurgitating cantharides

—when Ralps de Turbine was primate
I drove him a week long you know where

—from my breasts fell the milk which in rice
nourished a native of Egypt the same
brought thirty days after asps to a queen

SHOCKING CATASTROPHE CHARABANC CUMULUS

Giltedged humidities have a wetback following roam hails.
Missing from her home a pretty mountainbred veilcloud.
Sleet opened well with a ninefence advance in starmoney following transatlantic turnover and after teasing several joints closed sunpoint clearer on the hay.

but a voice brooded over these rorters:
I have one S O S tonight will Mistovair Drizzle
who was last heard of at Clapham Thunder
and who is believed to be downdale and spilly
at present in a harmattanserai somewhere in Undia
reföhn home immediately as his steppesmother
is flying dangerously still.

a brittle cloud dropped where the workmen were mending the
tramlines
waking us up.

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Herbert Read

Herbert Read attracted attention during the war by his prose accounts and his poems Naked Warriors. *Since then he has become widely known as a critic. He published at one time several other books of verse, which he has since absorbed in his* Collected Poems: *and recently some further accounts of the war in two pamphlets,* In Retreat *and* Ambush. *These form, with the descriptions given by* Aldington *and by* Robert Graves, *probably the most moving as well as the most permanent of the "war-books."*

His critical work began with an introduction to the Speculations *of* T. E. Hulme, *which he edited. It is no exaggeration to speak of this book as the most influential book of this generation; and through it Read's influence also has been more general than is supposed. His best book of criticism is probably* Reason and Romanticism; *in* English Prose Style *he laid the foundation of much subsequent critical work. He has just published a book on* Wordsworth.

Read was a Captain of infantry in the war, and is now Assistant Keeper of the Victoria and Albert Museum *in London.*

CUPID'S EVERLASTING HONEYMOON

Through the air they passed in rhythmic flight, their level languorous approach to Earth interrupted by amorous (alone by amorous) curvettings of mutual love. For a while they lingered on the phosphorescent edge of a shelly cloud; a swarm of cherubs their mica wings glittering in the sunrays shed silvery laughter wet limpid lilting in the aerial cloud-caverns. Away on a rocky thundercloud the aventurine cock of holy Peter opened his beak and screamed. The lark that had carolled evenly now rested beneath arched grasses.

Through space-devouring time the lovers flew. The ghosts of flowers plumes of steam the wings of fishes Balthasar's frankincense the fire of Etna the flesh of Icarus: bedded their imperceptible path. Above the city of Amiens they hovered and descended into a bar. At the dispensary of cocktails a woman was seated reading a mystic page of Hermas and waiting for the other end of a bracket which somewhere she had missed. She wore a rich brocaded robe straightly sloping over her featureless body: only her pale arms emerged: wavered: like birch saplings in a winter landscape.

She was seated beneath a crystal chandelier lit with a few candles that ran their merry light among the clustered drops. Her curious rings repeated these reflections drawing into prominence thin yellow hands: hands like an ivory Madonna's you might think: hands yellow with tobacco stain.

At the round porphyry table a few soldiers. One with a shaking finger drew a system of trenches in the beer slops. A weary hubbub of voices drifted about with the tobacco smoke. Did I ever tell you (the finger's voice was heard above the rest) what prodigious armies we had in Flanders. . . . Someone rattled dominoes: a frightened subaltern mistaking the noise for machine-gun fire blanched and momentarily trembled.

Psyche would like a cherry cocktail. How unnecessary! (snorted the barmaid tossing her locks). Cherries in wartime: the very idea! Cupid rebuked her for her impertinence and led Psyche across to the frightened subaltern, who was combing his hair with his fingers and muttering into his breast: Futile. Futile. Poor lad: Psyche yearned with an almost human sympathy. Two bloody years (he looked up and went on). Can't you understand? I'm sick of it all. I want it all to end: at any price. I want to get back. There is so much I want to do!

A messcart clattered through the cobbled streets outside: muffled: the bottles behind the bar clinked sullenly; but near.

And the subaltern noticing Psyche's discomfiture said of the barmaid: She is Isaiah's harlot, the virgin daughter of Babylon, that shall no more be called tender and delicate. Europe is fallen, fallen and is become a habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. But I must go: if I talk scriptures I shall be shot.

He made as if to leave but Psyche restrained him: she would pour balm on his spirit and shelter him in her everlasting liberty. Let the devils rage (she said) and let every foulness flourish till the land is a land of ashes. Then a river of clear water shall flow and wash away the black crust of ashes: it shall germinate the buried seed and the tree of life shall flourish again.

And Cupid said: Your abominations are born of the flesh: we alone who are children of the sun are free. Seek to be born again and to become like us.

A common soldier was writing with his tongue and a pencil: Dear old pal—I hope you are in the pink as this leaves me at present I am having a quiet half hour in one of these estaminets as they call them. You should see the tart what serves the grenadines. You wouldn't half be jealous not half! But don't be frightened dearie I wouldn't touch her with a bargepole. There is no glass in these here windows just old bags. Remember me to Jinnie and don't forget when I come home. . . .

It was then that Cupid and Psyche (existing in their own sphere of time) heard a distant slow advancing whimper of sound. It might be the cry of a falling angel. When I looked up Cupid had risen into the yellow gloom that radiated above the massed sparkles of the chandelier. He hung there horizontally like an amorino of the Renaissance; there he waited for the climax of that sound.

There were so many events in that little cubicle of space. Can I ever be sure that I saw them all? In our sorry scheme of time the gamut of that sound was short and shrill: the detonation sickening frame shuddering. So many events: but really I only remember one. I think I saw those pale sapling arms raised to meet the uprush of death: I think I saw the flesh bloodless against the explosive blast break like a clown's hoop to reveal the white incandescent bone. Then I too bent before the agony. . . .

. . . and only *heard* the crystal drops of the chandelier raining

down to make a cairn for the barmaid's body. The outer ruins rumbled about us: a disconnected racket: a roll of thunder like Nietzsche's moustache.

. . . . .

I alone of the living was alive. When the last wraith of acrid smoke cleared above the crystal mound gone were the non-substantial bodies of our heavenly guests: in that wraith the shadowy limbs of Psyche were involved.

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Faber & Faber.)

JAMES JOYCE

To explain the significance of James Joyce it is necessary in the first place to make a distinction between two literary publics. This is difficult, because any such division seems to imply some kind of snobism: the kind of snobism ridiculed as "high-brow," for example. But the distinction between high-brow and low-brow really begs the question; from the point of view of the music-hall comedian and his friend, the man-in-the-street, all serious writing is high-brow. For the purpose of this enquiry I would like to assume that we are all high-brows. Then we still need a distinction between what we may call a craft-conscious public, and a public merely out for instinctive enjoyment. The latter forms the majority, and to it most works of art are addressed. But there exists this other public, perhaps only numbering a few hundreds in any country, for whom literature is not a question of the direct absorption of a synthetic product, the work of art, but rather the analysis of it. Some people like a machine because it runs smoothly, and ask no more; others will be seeing how it works. It is to this latter type that the work of James Joyce appeals.

The two kinds of enjoyment are essentially different, but I do not think that there is any aura of intellectual superiority attached to either. The explanation is probably psychological; to one type the work of art appeals as a unity: they like to see the world of appearances reduced to a static definiteness: their enjoyment is contemplative. The other type, for whom stability and order are perhaps matters of course, the work of art appears as an harmony of distinct parts, and the harmony cannot be appreciated until the parts are seen in disjunction: enjoyment is dynamic.

So far so good; but in making this distinction I assume the identity of the work of art. The author of a novel does not stop to consider whether he should write for this kind of public or for that; his business, if he is a serious artist, is to create a work of art. That is to say, his object is always synthetic, and he does not care what kind of aesthetic enjoyment his work induces. But this is where the peculiarity of Mr. Joyce's method becomes evident. He is writing deliberately for the analysing public, and in his later work at any rate we may fairly say that the enjoyment is proportionate to the analytical power which the reader can contribute.

The public can now obtain an excellent example of Mr. Joyce's latest work, *Anna Livia Plurabelle.* In almost any single paragraph they will, if they persist, find a hundred shifting lights. There is an underlying warp which is the idle chatter of two washerwomen washing linen in the River Liffey. Into this warp is woven a weft which is every kind of association which the running warp arouses in the very well stored brain of the author. These associations may be conscious and are often erudite—references to Greek myths, to the Vedic religion, to obscure languages, to local legend or historical events; or they may be associations springing from the subconscious mind—puns, verbal distortions, thinly disguised obscenities, or merely euphonic or euphuistic word-play.

To the first kind of reader I described, it will all look and sound like so much gibberish. But those who are analytically minded will get a good deal of enjoyment from the mental effort of keeping up with the agile acrobatics of the author. It is a legitimate form of enjoyment, but how, it will be asked, does it differ from the enjoyment of a really difficult and erudite crossword puzzle? Here I must confess that I am not sufficiently a partisan of Mr. Joyce's methods to answer with any confidence. I only know that if this gibberish is read aloud it does acquire an odd sort of impressiveness, akin to impressiveness of poetry read in a language we do not understand. Beyond this there may be some kind of formal structure analogous to the structure of a fugue in music, but it is not in any way obvious.

A comprehensive explanation of Mr. Joyce's art would have to follow his development as a writer. I think I have read everything that Mr. Joyce has published, and to me the extravagances of his latest work do not come as a surprise. I see them as a gradual development from his earliest work. I see them also as an outcome of his innate romanticism. I know that Mr. Joyce has been hailed

as a classical writer, particularly by his commentator, Mr. Stuart Gilbert,[1] but that is a classification which I cannot accept. It rests on the fact that *Ulysses,* Mr. Joyce's masterpiece, is based throughout on a close structural parallelism with Homer's *Odyssey.* The notion rests on a fallacy which identifies form and content; just as though we were to say that water poured into a vase takes on the form and properties of that vase. All the evidence, it seems to me, goes to show that Mr. Joyce is really a romantic. His first stories, *Dubliners,* revealed that romantic interest in realism which comes from Norway rather than Greece; and Mr. Joyce's only play, *Exiles,* is a psychological drama far removed from the canons of classical drama. *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* published in 1916, is a work of great lyrical beauty, but it also belongs to that introspective mode of self projection which is the very type of romantic literature. Even if we read into it a certain ironic detachment, we must still remember that irony is only perverted sentiment, and the recourse of disillusioned romantics. But the most complete evidence of Mr. Joyce's romanticism is to be found in his verse—*Chamber Music* and *Pomes Penyeach.* For example:

> The moon's greygolden meshes make
> All night a veil,
> The shorelamps in the sleeping lake
> Laburnum tendrils trail.
>
> The sly reeds whisper to the night
> A name—her name—
> And all my soul is a delight,
> A swoon of shame.

Mr. Gilbert quotes this poem as evidence of Mr. Joyce's classical spirit, presumably because it is written in regular iambics! It is the same assumption as that which led him into claiming *Ulysses* as a classical work. The truth is, that what matters in the distinction between romantic and classic is not the form, but the informing spirit. The only tolerable distinction between romanticism and classicism is that which relates itself to the distinction drawn by psychologists between introspective and objective types of personality. Romanticism is the expression of personal values, classicism the expression of universal values. It may be true that all classicists are

[1] *James Joyce's Ulyssses* by Stuart Gilbert.

or have been in some degree romantic (they would not be human otherwise) and it is therefore possible to admit the early romanticism of Mr. Joyce, and still claim a classical spirit for *Ulysses*. But I do not think this claim can be allowed, because the necessities of objectivity imply an ever-increasing tendency towards clarity, simplicity, and universality. There is profundity in classical art, but no obscurity. That, if anything, is its main disadvantage, for the mind is so constituted that it likes to encounter a certain measure of resistance in its perceptions. Therein lies one of the justifications of romanticism.

A certain type of romanticism seeks to express itself in a complication of forms. As a matter of fact, it is essentially the Northern, and more particularly the Celtic, type of Romanticism. The true counterpart of Mr. Joyce's *Ulysses* is not Homer's *Odyssey*, but a Celtic manuscript like the Book of Kells. The pre-gothic transcendentalism of Northern Europe found its typical expression in highly complex geometric patterns—an extraordinary mass of agitated linear motives with details drawn from the animal world, the whole compressed within a framework of perfect symmetry and extreme rigidity. How exactly such a description fits *Ulysses* will be evident to anyone who has read that work.

By accusing Mr. Joyce of romanticism, I am not condemning him. It is not the business of the critic to take sides in this everlasting opposition of romantic and classic. His business is merely to identify and classify. With no other than a scientific intention, I find Mr. Joyce to be a romantic poet of the most extreme kind; he is so romantic that he has reduced his egocentricity to its last refinement, and evolved an art of which only he himself can be the full participant. But in the process he has so revitalised the current use of language that no one interested in the art of writing from a craft-conscious point of view can afford to neglect his example and achievement. Mr. Joyce is the high priest of modern literature, precisely because literature is a priesthood and has a sanctuary more inaccessible than the monasteries of Thibet.

(Courtesy of the Author.)

W. H. Auden

W. H. Auden has recently gone down from Oxford, where he edited The Oxford Outlook *and* Oxford Poetry. *He has contributed an important poem,* Paid On Both Sides: A Charade *to* The Criterion; *this, as well as the poems here printed, will be included in a book of* Poems *he is about to publish. His poetry is of some rhythmic variety, and characteristic of it is the imagic background of ruined industry and abandoned mines.*

POEM

1

It was Easter as I walked in the public gardens
Hearing the frogs exhaling from the pond,
Watching traffic of magnificent cloud
Moving without anxiety on open sky—
Season when lovers and writers find
An altering speech for altering things,
An emphasis on new names, on the arm
A fresh hand with fresh power.
But thinking so I came at once
Where solitary man sat weeping on a bench,
Hanging his head down, with his mouth distorted
Helpless and ugly as an embryo chicken.

So I remember all of those whose death
Is necessary condition of the season's setting forth,
Who sorry in this time look only back
To Christmas intimacy, a winter dialogue
Fading in silence, leaving them in tears.
And recent particulars come to mind;
The death by cancer of a once hated master,
A friend's analysis of his own failure,
Listened to at intervals throughout the winter
At different hours and in different rooms
But always with success of others for comparison,
The happiness, for instance, of my friend Kurt Groote,
Absence of fear in Gerhart Meyer
From the sea, the truly strong man.

A 'bus ran home then, on the public ground
Lay fallen bicycles like huddled corpses:
No chattering valves of laughter emphasised
Nor the swept gown ends of a gesture stirred
The sessile hush; until a sudden shower
Fell willing into grass and closed the day,
Making choice seem a necessary error.

2

Coming out of me living is always thinking,
Thinking changing and changing living,
Am feeling as it was seeing—
In city leaning on harbour parapet
To watch a colony of duck below
Sit, preen, and doze on buttresses
Or upright paddle on flickering stream,
Casually fishing at a passing straw.
Those find sun's luxury enough,
Shadow know not of homesick foreigner
Nor restlessness of intercepted growth.

All this time was anxiety at night,
Shooting and barricade in street.
Walking home late I listened to a friend
Talking excitedly of final war
Of proletariat against police—
That one shot girl of nineteen through the knees
They threw that one down concrete stair—
Till I was angry, said I was pleased.

Time passes in Hessen, in Gutensberg,
With hill top and evening holds me up,
Tiny observer of enormous world.
Smoke rises from factory in field,
Memory of fire: On all sides heard
Vanishing music of isolated larks:
From village square voices in hymn,
Men's voices, an old use.
And I above standing, saying in thinking:

"Is first baby, warm in mother,
Before born and is still mother,
Time passes and now is other,
Is knowledge in him now of other,
Cries in cold air, himself no friend.
In grown man also, may see in face
In his day-thinking and in his night-thinking
Is wareness and is fear of other,
Alone in flesh, himself no friend."

He say "We must forgive and forget,"
Forgetting saying but is unforgiving
And unforgiving is in his living;
Body reminds in him to loving,
Reminds but takes no further part,
Perfunctorily affectionate in hired room
But takes no part and is unloving
But loving death. May see in dead,
In face of dead that loving wish,
As one returns from Africa to wife
And his ancestral property in Wales."

Yet sometimes man look and say good
At strict beauty of locomotive,
Completeness of gesture or unclouded eye;
In me so absolute unity of evening
And field and distance was in me for peace,
Was over me in feeling without forgetting
Those ducks' indifference, that friend's hysteria,
Without wishing and with forgiving,
To love my life, not as other,
Not as bird's life, not as child's,
"Cannot," I said, "being no child now nor a bird."

3

Order to stewards and the study of time,
Correct in books, was earlier than this
But joined this by the wires I watched from train,
Slackening of wire and posts' sharp reprimand,
In month of August to a cottage coming.

Being alone, the frightened soul
Returns to this life of sheep and hay
No longer his: he every hour
Moves further from this and must so move,
As child is weaned from his mother and leaves home
But taking the first steps falters, is vexed
By opposite strivings for entropic peace,
Retreat to lost home or advance to new,
Happy only to find home, a place
Where no tax is levied for being there.

So, insecure, he loves and love
Is insecure, gives less than he expects.
He knows not if it be seed in time to display
Luxuriantly in a wonderful fructification
Or whether it be but a degenerate remnant
Of something immense in the past but now
Surviving only as the infectiousness of disease
Or in the malicious caricature of drunkenness;
Its end glossed over by the careless but known long
To finer perception of the mad and ill.

Moving along the track which is himself,
He loves what he hopes will last, which, gone,
Begins the difficult work of mourning,
And as foreign settlers to strange county come,
By mispronunciation of native words
And by intermarriage create a new race
And a new language, so may the soul
Be weaned at last to independent delight.

Startled by the violent laugh of a jay
I went from wood, from crunch underfoot,
Air between stems as under water;
As I shall leave the summer, see autumn come
Focussing stars more sharply in the sky,
See frozen buzzard flipped down the weir
And carried out to sea, leave Autumn,
See Winter, Winter for earth and us,
A forethought of death that we may find ourselves at death
Not helplessly strange to the new conditions.

4

It is time for the destruction of error.
The chairs are being brought in from the garden,
The summer talk stopped on that savage coast
Before the storms, after the guests and birds:
In sanatoriums they laugh less and less,
Less certain of cure; and the loud madman
Sinks now into a more terrible calm.

This is the account of growing, of knowing;
First difference from first innocence
Is feeling cold and nothing there,
Continual weeping and oversleeping,
Is mocking, nudging, and defence of fear;
Verbal fumbling and muscle mumbling,
Imagination by mispronunciation.
Sebaceous belly, swollen skull,
Exchanging hats and calling dear
Are rich and silly, poor and dull.

The falling leaves know it, the children,
At play on the fuming alkali-tip
Or by the flooded football ground, know it—
This is the dragon's day, the devourer's:
Orders are given to the enemy for a time
With underground proliferation of mould,
With constant whisper and the casual question,
To haunt the poisoned in his shunned house,
To destroy the efflorescence of the flesh,
The intricate play of the mind, to enforce
Conformity with the orthodox bone,
With organised fear, the articulated skeleton.

For this is how it ends,
The account of growing, the history of knowing,
As more comatose and always in,
Living together in wretched weather
In a doorless room in a leaking house,
Wrong friends at the wrong time.

You whom I gladly walk with, touch,
Or wait for as one certain of good,
We know it, we know that love
Needs more than the admiring excitement of union,
More than the abrupt self-confident farewell,
The heel on the finishing blade of grass,
The self-confidence of the falling root,
Needs death, death of the grain, our death,
Death of the old gang; would leave them
In sullen valley where is made no friend,
The old gang to be forgotten in the spring,
The hard bitch and the riding-master,
Stiff underground; deep in clear lake
The lolling bridegroom, beautiful, there.

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Faber & Faber.)

A. S. J. Tessimond

A. S. J. Tessimond is a young English poet whose work foreshadows developments of interest. He has a vividly descriptive, pastiche *style and has been satisfied to exploit this talent; but there is the promise of more considerable writing. He has contributed to* transition, This Quarter, *to* Poetry, *and to some of the smaller literary magazines.*

SEA PORT

Green sea-tarnished copper
and sea-tarnished gold
of cupolas

Sea-runnelled streets
channelled by salt air
that wears the white stone

The sunlight-filled cistern
of a dry dock
Square shadows
Sunslatted smoke above meticulous stooping of cranes

Water pressed up by ship's prows
going coming
City dust turned
back by the sea-wind's
wall

(Courtesy of the Author.)

CHAPLIN

The sun, a heavy spider, spins in the thirsty sky.
The wind hides under cactus leaves, in empty doorways. Only the
wry

small shadow accompanies Hamlet-Petrouchka-Chaplin across the
plain,
the wry small sniggering shadow preceding, then in train.

The cavalcade has passed towards impossible horizons again;
but still the mask—the quick-flick fanfare of the cane remains.

The diminuendo of footsteps even is done,
but there remain (Don Quixote) hat, cane, smile and sun.

Goliaths fall before the sling, but craftier ones than these
are ambushed—malice of sliding mats, revolving doors, strings in
the dark and falling trees.

God kicks us in the pants and sets bananaskins on stairs;
and tall sombreroed centaurs win the tulip lips and aureoled hair,

while we, craned from the gallery, throw our cardboard flowers
and our feet jerk to tunes not played for ours.

(Courtesy of the Author and of *This Quarter.*)

BIRCH TREE

The birch-tree in winter
leaning over the secret pool
is Narcissus in love
with the slight white branches
the slim trunk
in the dark glass

but
(spring coming on)
is afraid
and scarfs the white limbs
in green

(Courtesy of the Author and of *This Quarter.*)

Stephen Hudson

Stephen Hudson is the pen-name of Sydney Schiff, a writer who, although no longer young, did not begin to publish until 1919 when he brought out Richard Kurt. *Since then he has published six books, the most recent of which are* Myrtle, Richard, Myrtle and I, *and, in 1930,* A True Story. *There is below the surface of his writing a profound psychological structure, in the tradition of Marcel Proust, whose work Hudson is engaged in translating.*

FRAGMENT

– of an –

UNFINISHED NOVEL

The short, square figure of Hartmann, in service uniform covered with ribands, came to meet us, hand out-stretched, in the corridor leading to the restaurant. He was seemingly in robust health and at the first glance I observed that the presentation of himself by my hitherto unobtrusive friend had completely changed. His demeanour and manner betokened extraordinary self-enlargement; he had visibly swollen. We had exchanged occasional letters during the war, but beyond knowing he had acted as liaison-officer I was entirely ignorant of his war record. From my knowledge of his

physical and intellectual capacities, he was a doctor of philosophy and a fine Alpinist, I was sure he had carried out his duties meritoriously, but I was wholly unprepared for this revelation of a new adjunctive personality. I immediately realised that, in my reception of this man I once knew but now did not, there was a certain lack of responsiveness which arose from my inability to estimate his character in terms of military achievement. I anticipated, once the preliminaries of renewed acquaintance had been disposed of and the embarrassment inseparable from such occasions had disappeared, that my old friend would spontaneously resume his original shape. On this assumption, with the intention of linking him up with his own past and freeing him from the need of a new introduction, I endeavoured to guide the conversation into the familiar channels of our earlier intercourse. I encountered, however, a determined resistance to my effort and an evident intention on his part to force some sort of homage from me in one way or another as a preliminary to any reknitting of mutual associations. When, aiming at a subject which I thought innocuous, I solicited information about conditions in the south of France, his reply, "I know nothing about them; you don't seem to remember that when I was last there, in 1916, I was recovering from being gassed," proved that my immunity from some sort of acknowledgment of my personal obligation to him was not to be so easily obtained.

Thus matters stood when Myrtle, whose eyes were directed past our guest to the corner of the room, suddenly exclaimed: "That must be Proust."

I saw what appeared to be a quite young man, whose exceedingly pallid face was encircled by jet-black clustering hair.

"What! You know Proust? I never heard of him till the other day."

Hartmann's voice expressed surprise at our interest.

"We don't know him yet. You must have forgotten that I wrote you we should come here tonight to make his acquaintance. Myrtle, why not go across and speak to him?"

Myrtle rose and went across the room, empty but for ourselves and the solitary diner beside whom, after a brief exchange of words, she took a seat.

"So that is Marcel Proust?" Hartmann stared. "They say he used to be a terrific snob, but he has shut himself up for years and sees no one now. Curious you should be so much interested in him." Again he stared and, as he did so, Proust's eyes met mine, smiling,

questioning, then left them for Myrtle's. "Daudet is making a campaign to give him the Prix de Goncourt, but the literary world is against him. They say his books are about nothing but pre-war society in its decadence, and that his style is extraordinarily obscure and involved. I've not had time to read his books. I have to work for my country. How could you manage to be interested in Proust while the war was going on? Relief from the war atmosphere, I suppose; the cry of those who were safe at home. Well, well, perhaps I should have felt the same if I hadn't——" breaking off significantly, he nodded his head up and down. "After all, one would need to console oneself for not being able to go to the front. It seems," he went on, "that in the best circles people don't care to know Proust. This for your guidance."

"It is as a writer, not as a social figure that he interests me."

My mind was seeking a clearer explanation of my friend's attitude towards me than his words supplied. It seemed to me that under his thinly veiled irony there lurked a deeper resentment than could be accounted for by my exemption, in view of my age, from the hardships and dangers of war. Was his masked hostility merely the culmination of a gradually accumulated load of resentment, inspired not by any specific acts of mine, but by my personality, my point of view and by my manner of life?

How often one is at a loss to account for a sudden ebullition on one side or the other, which falls like a thunderbolt from a clear sky and disfigures what has worn the appearance of an agreeable relationship. I recalled a talk about this very thing, one of those many discursive talks with Myrtle that are part of the stuff out of which the fabric of our life together is woven. The subject was the accumulated rancours that burst forth spontaneously and unexpectedly, almost without provocation, as a result of some insignificant difference of opinion, when one, till then a supposed friend, suddenly assumes a tone of aggressive hostility. There is, of course, the reverse case when, to one's joy and inmost comfort, a person till then relegated to the background of one's sentimental being, stands forward at a moment of strain as a supporter, even as a champion, but, like all precious things, the second is a far rarer experience. Moreover I recalled, when during our engagement, by the permission of M. Vendramin, I invited Eugène to meet Myrtle at her father's house, she had observed in his manner a lack of sympathy, in his words a thinly veiled hostility until that moment entirely unsuspected by me.

There was, I recognised, a good case to be made for Eugène Hartmann's point of view. He had, under the test of service in the field, shown the stuff he was made of. He had had his chance, and taken it, of proving that he was something more, or something besides the intelligent, sociable being I used to know. It was not unnatural if he wanted me to feel that one who had been face to face with death day and night for months at a stretch, had something to teach me. It was perhaps only human that he should resent my readoption of my old attitude towards him, that he should expect at least a certain deference.

A few minutes later he drew himself up in martial fashion and bade me Good-night. Two of the famous *fines de la maison* imparted warmth to his handshake and to that extent relieved my discomfort as I turned towards the corner where Myrtle sat with the stranger.

A closer view, though it modified somewhat the first impression of youth, confirmed Proust's striking appearance, especially the size of his eyes, which seemed to fill his face. Their darkness and intensity were enhanced by the deep shadows beneath them and upon the heavy lids, by the delicate eyebrows which marked themselves against the smooth unwrinkled whiteness of his forehead. I had time to notice that his hair was cut in a fringe and that his torso gave an effect of heaviness as he half rose at my approach.

"And your friend?" he asked, as I took his hand and sat down on his other side. "Will he not feel aggrieved that you left him? Had you not better go and find him before he has left the hotel, and rejoin me later on—or another evening—tomorrow perhaps—that is, if I am not too ill to go out?"

"Please don't be concerned about him. He knows me too well to be offended. Besides, he knew we came here expressly to meet you—it was on that understanding that we asked him to dinner."

"Ah! You had seen him then before this evening? I understood you had only arrived today." He looked at me searchingly, suspiciously almost.

"We arrived just in time to dress and come here."

His eyes were still fixed on mine, the searching look remained. Suspicion was fading into curiosity.

"How long was it since you had met?"

I felt myself under examination.

"Not since before the war."

His face remained immobile, mask-like, only his eyes and his voice betrayed amazement as he repeated: "Not since before the war"—paused, then again: "And you left him like that with hardly a word, without even accompanying him to the door, without even a gesture of regret? But perhaps," his eyes left me and sought Myrtle's, "it is English to restrain emotion on such occasions."

"I felt none. I wanted to get rid of him so that I could come to you. That is why we are here. What does he matter—in comparison?"

He turned to me again, insistent.

"Your friend of many years! And I—a stranger."

"You aren't a stranger. We know you intimately—more intimately than I know Eugène Hartmann."

Now his whole face changed, lit up.

"You feel that? You really feel that?" His eyes moved slowly from mine to Myrtle's.

She nodded affirmatively.

"But Swann isn't myself," and into the questioning expression again crept a shade of distrust, "there is little about myself in that book. And even so, your friend, he would not realise that. I am thinking of his feelings. I am sorry for him."

"Please do not be. I assure you he understands——"

"I should not understand. I should feel unhappy if a friend I cared for left me like that, after years of separation—with the war between us. When will you see him again?"

I glanced at Myrtle despairingly. Should we never get him off the subject of Eugène Hartmann?

At that moment, a curious looking little waiter, one of the underlings in long aprons who act as "commis" to their superiors in full dress, sidled up furtively and stood close to him. Proust lifted his head.

"What is it, Cognou?"

"Monsieur sent for me?"

"Ah! I had forgotten, I will see you later on." As Cognou moved away, Proust's eyes followed him for a moment, silently.

"His brother has been discharged. I want to know what it is about."

His tone was serious, matter of fact, as though the concerns of Cognou were an everyday matter with him.

. . . . .

After that strange evening with him, I went to my bed uneasy

and uncertain in mind. I could not reconcile Proust's behaviour with my conception of his greatness. Was there something insincere and exaggerated in his solicitude for Hartmann, a perfect stranger to him, when he recurrently alluded to the disappointment my friend must feel at being deprived of our society on his account? And his self-conscious exploitation of his personality, his almost flagrant over-tipping of waiters, his singular interest in the private lives and intimate affairs of these hotel hirelings whom it was impossible to credit with the remotest understanding of his attitude towards themselves. I felt that they regarded him and his proceedings as a joke, though too well-trained to betray themselves. I could not at the time bring myself to confess my disappointment to Myrtle; I was loath to disclose to her my apprehension that our high opinion of his worth might be based upon an illusion. We had read deeply into "Swann" and we had discovered no single flaw, whether in the pattern of his reasoning or in the basic rightness of his motives and of his judgment. In no novelist known to us, except Tolstoi, had we discovered a veracity so entire and unswerving. What was the value, after all, of first impressions? Should I regard my doubts as intuitive or was I influenced by mere exterior behaviour which indicated nothing more than a sensibility so delicate that it quivered at any contact?

Human life is in ever-active conspiracy against the creative artist to seduce him from his integrity, and it might be that Proust, for all his heroic exposure of the lies and shams and hyprocrisies of society, was not immune from its lures. We recognize two kinds of greatness, greatness of achievement and greatness of soul. When these are combined in the person of one man, he is a hero. All fine work is heroic in its own measure, but it is only supremely so when there is behind it no motive of personal advantage. Proust's work was in essence a struggle to free his spirit from the bonds his physical and temperamental weakness had laid upon him. That there was in him greatness of soul I could not doubt. Was it at times betrayed by those very gifts which made him an artist? Would the grace and magnetic charm of his personality dog his creative development, or would he throw off the shackles that bound him to the world he despised?

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Samuel B. Beckett

S. B. Beckett is the most interesting of the younger Irish writers. He is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and has lectured at the École Normale Supérieure *in Paris. He has a great knowledge of Romance literature, is a friend of* Rudmose-Brown *and of* Joyce, *and has adapted the* Joyce *method to his poetry with original results. His impulse is lyric, but has been deepened through this influence and the influence of* Proust *and of the historic method. He has recently won the* Hours Press *prize with a poem* Whoroscope: *and has contributed to* transition *and* This Quarter, *and to the examination of Joyce's* Work in Progress.

HELL CRANE TO STARLING

Oholiba charm of my eyes
there is a cave above Tsoar
and a Spanish donkey there.

You needn't bring wine to that non-relation.

And he won't know
who changed his name
when Jehovah sprained the seam of his hauch
in Peniel in Peniel
after he'd sent on the thirty camels
suckling for dear death
and so many fillies
that I don't want log tablets.
Mister Jacobson mister Hippolitus-in-hell Jacobson
we all know
how you tried to rejoin your da.
Bilha always blabs.

Because Benoni skirted aftercrop
of my aching loins
you'll never see him
reddening the wall in two dimensions
and if you did
you might spare the postage to Chaldea.

But there's a bloody fine ass
lepping with stout and impurée de pommes
in the hill above Tsoar.

CASKET OF PRALINEN FOR A DAUGHTER OF A DISSIPATED MANDARIN

Is he long enough in the leg?
Già but his faice. . . .
Oh me little timid Rosinette
isn't it Bartholo, synthetic grey cat, regal candle?
Keep Thyrsis for your morning ones.

Hold your head well over the letter darling
or they'll fall on the blotting.
Will you ever forget that soupe arrosée
on the first of the first,
spoonfeeding the weeping gladiator
renewing our baptismal vows
and dawn cracking all along the line.
Slobbery assumption of the innocents
two Irish in one God.

Radiant lemon-whiskered Christ
and you obliging porte-phallic-portfolio
and blood-faced Tom
disbelieving
in the Closerie cocktail that is my
and of course John the bright boy of the class
swallowing an apostolic spit
THE BULLIEST FEED IN 'ISTORY
if the boy scouts hadn't booked a trough
for the eleventh's eleventh eleven years after.

Now me boy
take a hitch in your lyrical loinstring.

What is this that is more
than the anguish of Beauty,
this gale of pain that was not prepared
in the caves of her eyes?

Is it enough
a stitch in the hem of the garment of God?

To-night her gaze would be less
than a lark's barred sunlight.

Oh I am ashamed
of all clumsy artistry
I am ashamed of presuming
to arrange words
of everything but the ingenuous fibres
that suffer honestly.

Fool! do you hope to untangle
the knot of God's pain?

Melancholy Christ that was a soft one!
Oh yes I think that was perhaps just a very little inclined to be
rather too self-conscious.

Schluss!
Now ladies and gents
a chocolate-coated hiccough to our old friend.
Put on your hats and sit easy.

Oh beauty!
oh thou predatory evacuation,
from the bowels of my regret—
readily affected
by the assimilation of a purging gobbet
from my momery's involuntary vomit—
violently projected,
oh beauty!
oh innocent and spluttering beautiful!

What price the Balbec express?
Albion Albion mourn for him mourn
thy cockerup Willy the idiot boy
the portly scullion's codpiece.
Now who'll discover in Mantegna's
butchery stout foreshortened Saviour
recognitions of transcendent
horse-power?
Sheep he wrote the very much doubting
genial illegible landscape gardener.
Gloucester's no bimbo
and he's in Limbo
so all's well wih the gorgonzola cheese of human kindness.

Though the swine were slaughtered
beneath the waves
not far from the firm sand
they're gone they're gone
my Brussels Braut!

TEXT

Miserere oh colon
oh passionate ilium
and Frances the cook in the study mourning
an abstract belly
instead of the writhing asparagus-plumer
smashed on delivery
by the most indifferential calculus
that never came out
or ever disdressed
a redknuckled slut of a Paduan Virtue.

Show that plate here to your bedfruit
spent baby
and take a good swig
at our buxom calabash.
There's more than bandit Glaxo
underneath me maternity toga.

So she sags and here's the other.
That's the real export or I'm a Jungfrau.
Now wipe your moustache and hand us the vaseline.

Open Thou my lips
and
(if one dare make a suggestion)
Thine eye of skyflesh.
Am I a token of Godcraft?
The masterpiece of a scourged apprentice?
Where is my hippipit's cedar tail
and belly muscles?
Shall I cease to lament
being not as the flashsneezing
non-suppliant airtight alligator?

Not so but perhaps
at the sight and the sound of
a screechy flatfooted Tuscany peacock's
Strauss fandango and recitative
not forgetting
he stinks eternal.

Alas my scorned packthread!
No blade has smoothed the forrowed cheeks
that my tears corrode.
My varicose veins take my kneeling thoughts
from the piteous pelican.

Quick tip losers narcissistic inverts.
Twice I parted two crawlers
dribbling their not connubial strangles
in Arcadia of all places.
Believe me Miss Ops
swan flame or shower of gold
its one to ten at the time
(no offence to your noble deathjerks)
I know I was at it seven . . .
the bitch she's blinded me!
Manto me dear
an iced sherbet and me blood's a solid.

We are proud in our pain
our life was not blind.
Worms breed in their red tears
as they slouch unnamed
scorned by the black ferry
despairing of death
who shall not scour in swift joy
the bright hill's girdle
nor tremble with the dark pride of torture
and the bitter dignity of an ingenious damnation.

Lo-Ruhama Lo-Ruhama
pity is quick with death.
Presumptuous passionate fool come now
to the sad maimed shades
and stand cold
on the cold moon.

YOKE OF LIBERTY

The lips of her desire are grey
and parted like a silk loop
threatening
a slight wanton wound.
she preys wearily
on sensitive wild things
proud to be torn
by the grave crouch of her beauty.
But she will die and her snare
tendered so patiently
to my tamed and watchful sorrow
will break and hang
in a pitiful crescent.

(Courtesy of the Author.)

H. D.

H. D. is the pen-name of Mrs. H. D. Aldington, the outstanding poet of the Imagist movement. Born in America, H. D. has always lived in England and in Switzerland, where she has recently worked on films with Pool Company of Close-Up. *Her poetry, and in particular her exploration of blank verse rhythms (paralleled by the differently directed exploration made by Eliot) has been an influence on post-war poetry which is usually underestimated. She has published* Sea Garden *and a number of translations of Greek choruses of great fidelity and beauty. Her prose work is little known and, except superficially, is less* contemporary *than her poetry.*

CHORUSES FROM MORPHEUS

"Dream—dark-winged"

XI.

Achilles stayed a moment and is gone,
man,
man,
and child,
the warrior,
all are one;
I charmed the three
to unity in my arms,
I would re-make,
re-break them
and re-charm;
go,
this perfection leads to ultimate death;
hemlock
they say,
refines the deepest bliss;
the night of ultimate darkness
waits us
who can fail
the quest,
the golden morrow
for a dream—slight
interim of madness;

love,
this love I feel
craves anodine of hatred,
loneliness—fire and pine,
the crest of hill-tops,
scent of the wild-cedar;

I would be free,
be free;
go
for I fear
lest I strike swift
as she, the lynx and bear;
the Huntress claims me even amid the dream,
the breath of Artemis
stays this latter kiss.

XII.

Medes,
Greeks
and Phrygians
suddenly are gone,
there is no lover,
no child
but a song,
song wrought enchantment,
said "you are a god,"
song made its sequence,
man
and man
and child;
now you have been a father to yourself,
let poppies wither
for this lovelier crown;
see,
I would pluck the olive
from my own
chaplet
to name you
poet with the rest;

lover and lover,
man-child and a god,
all that is over;
see the kingly rod
is twined with laurel,
sacrosanct
and blest.

Let us be gone,
remember what is best:
remembering this god last;
though I was tired of measures like deft oars,
now I return,
a beggar
crave far shores,
would take my place upon the rower's seat;
avail myself of crumbs from hero's fare,
take lees of wine,
steal, cringe,
slave with the rest,
only to beat time with them,
but to feel
intimately
of them, Argonites,
who scale
the Delphic head-land
on the Delphic quest.

XIII.

Which
nevertheless
through toil
and dreariness,
brings only bliss;
which
nevertheless,
through pain
and definite loss,
brings only happiness,
alone

sanctity;
His fiery kiss
must burn away this kiss
(this
and the one next after
and the next)
His fiery touch
must burn away the dross
of dreams of Medes and Grecians,
and the host
flying with Helen
and the frenzied troop
even of mad Iacchus;
His ultimate kiss
alone must comfort us
who place love foremost,
then find song is best;

Love
is a garment
riven in the light
that rises from Parnassus,
showing
the night is over;
love and love
is a frayed garment;
see
He strikes
through love and love and love and lover's bliss
as sun-light through a purple cloud,
and takes love to him,
Lover
and the shroud
of past endeavour.

TATTER

(from a novel)

Fascination of Karen who says everything two ways. Fascination of Karen; she still retains Karen eyes. The Karen-eyed Karen. There was no possible intention that had precluded the Delphic, the Attic sort of adulation, the Karen-eyed Karen. Let Karen keep her Karen eyes and I will follow her. Simply my curiosity . . . because Karen can't do anything after the Delphic music. After the myrtle-colour of the eyes smudged in of a head in the Acropolis . . . Karen.

What the Arabs call white roses didn't exactly say it. *Stood Dido with a willow in her hand* said some of it. There were things to be said, there are things to be said, there is some child somewhere who will say them. Stick to first principles, eat and be eaten. Karen had discovered her first principle in Tatter. "What's its name?" said Stella, "O," said Karen, "Tatterdemalion . . . I took the first thing I stuck a pin into, in my Roget's *Thesaurus,* do you remember?"

"Tatter, you are called something else, precisely?" One talked to Tatter that way. He made one sit up, jerk straight a fox fur, give in, give up, wait happily for the development of the next generation. Phoebe didn't have this effect on her. Stella said, "Tatter you must meet my daughter." The eyes opposite were pool-water, deep, with extravagant line of soot black, the mouth pouched like a child Pharoah, there was a remarkable disparity between the baby head, not older nor more round than Phoebe, the tall body that might have been Discobolus. The head was a baby head, not half so wise as Phoebe. "I suppose you're about . . . sixteen?" Nobody could suppose that, looking at black stars in soot-lined, deep, tilted, slightly squirrel-like, long eyes. The boy was combination of Pharoah, squirrel and baby. Something must be done, obviously, about it. One spoke to these things casually, asked them if they liked school. One said all the wrong things, knowing that one said them, egging oneself forward, saying, "he will expect me, as mother of a marriageable daughter, to say them." Her daughter (ten) became marriageable . . . that is, if there is no too great disparity in age. The disparity was not too great. The squirrel Pharoah answered the question she had flung out somewhere, "fourteen." Fourteen hitched on to some-

thing—Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases* and the fact that Karen had had a brother . . . of course, Tatter was the nephew. For a moment Stella had thought the odd tall little being was just Karen. Karen had done well to try to "have a child." This was perhaps the answer. "You . . . like school!"

Tatter up and down the street in and out of houses. There were presumably others like him but he was the first, the only one that mattered. Tatter, lovable and unselfconscious, reproving Karen was another revelation. "He's a grubbly little gnome," said Karen. Her eyes were shut, inimitable pattern of eyes-shut that Stella had forgotten. Tatter was a grubby little gnome. He opened doors, wilful Peter Pan, obvious sort of squirrel child-Pharoah. He was commonplace; like Seth, he linked one up with everything. Seth was that, sort of Irish eyes you get on an old gramophone record, things seen in movies. Tatter did that same thing. Seth Peterson and Tatter were worlds ahead of anybody, they did these things unselfconsciously, they only linked up with the myrtle colour of the pervanch eyes smudged in, with Lippo Lippi thumb marks, on marble eye-sockets of pre-Phidian marble. Karen was pre-Phidian marble. The head rose now from another frock, a blue thing, old as the hills obviously, "my landlady," remarked Karen, seeing Stella staring, "washed it." Stella said, "it seems to have done it no harm." Tatter was saying he wouldn't have one of the cigarettes Stella automatically proffered. "Doesn't Tatter smoke then?" Karen said, as if from a prompter's box, "yes . . . this time certainly." Tatter took one of the tiny Russians, the last of the box that Adrian had left when Pamela had been there. "O . . . what did did you think of Adrian?" Karen brought eyes back; inimitable pattern of eyes half-shut, became obvious open eyes on guard. " . . . *what* is the matter with him?" "I wish you'd tell me, Karen."

"Have another, Tatter? But that isn't your name?" Tatter said his name was Richard Summers. "That's no name for you, Tatter . . . though beautiful. What will you do Tatter?" He answered with no hesitation, "I write now. I want really to be an actor." "What do you write, Tatter?" "O mostly about myself," apologetic gesture of every author. He made exact and inimitable gesture, that familiar intimation of a shrug of condescending depreciating, towards one's work. He had seen someone do that; he was medium, one saw, to any sort of forces. He was like Karen. He was medium toward ex-

pression, not mediumistic like Karen. Adrian had said, "she was born with gifts we all struggle to attain to." Adrian had said, "it was too easy for her. She introverted, turned inward those gifts." Adrian had "seen" Karen and drawn away, "there would be nothing but madness in that relationship. Karen was saying of Adrian, "his perception is greater than his intellect. He perceives things that not his mind and perhaps hardly any mind, could cope with. If he could attach his intellect to his perception——" she had made the gesture that included Stella, Tatter, Duse, Bernhardt, Phrene. The gesture said that a mind equal to Adrian's perception, attached to the perception of Adrian would mean world-renaissance. Karen had "seen" Adrian. How do we manage, striking across layers of superimposed Chinese faces, exotic taste (Lei Chei) chatter, "but *what* is being written?", close-ups and fade-outs of half-caste waitresses and the proprietor's wife, with Japanese, Javanese profile behind a counter piled with pumpkin-coloured melons, to get at these things? How do we manage across continents, ages, race prejudice and American counter-perception to strike bed-rock? There was no time, no space, no interval demanded. Karen "saw" Adrian in a flash and Karen, perceiving that he drew back, was being hateful. "Karen."

"What?" "I didn't say anything?" "You did do." "No, I didn't." "You better go read, Tatter." Tatter astonishing unfolded Tatter, who loomed thin and fawn-like toward the ceiling.

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Elsie Elizabeth Phare

Elsie Phare is a graduate and research student of Cambridge. She has also studied in Paris and in Rome. She has written extensively on the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, and sections of her work have appeared in Experiment. *Her criticism is at once scholarly and penetrating, and enriched by a wide reading: it has been influenced by the work of T. E. Hulme. She is an Anglo-Catholic; and is now working on the writings of the English Exiles in Paris during the Interregnum.*

Extracts from AN ESSAY ON THE DEVOTIONAL POETRY OF T. S. ELIOT

1

"Les passions de la jeunesse ne sont guère plus opposées au salut que la tiédeur des vieilles gens."—*La Rochefoucauld.*

Wherever T. S. Eliot describes the phenomenon of spiritual old age he not only detaches himself from it (that would prove nothing, for it seems that it is only in Freud that a peculiarity laid bare is a peculiarity scotched) but treats it with some contempt: I would instance *Gerontion, The Hollow Men,* even *A Song for Simeon.* The same is true of W. B. Yeats in his book *The Tower,* the theme of which is the poet's resignation of himself to the inevitable old age of the body; the admirable poem with which the book opens, *Sailing to Byzantium,* might be a verse transcription of one chapter of T. E. Hulme's *Speculations:*

> That is no country for old men. The young
> In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
> Those dying generations—at their song,
> The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
> Fish, flesh or fowl, command all summer long
> Whatever is begotten born and dies
> Caught in that sensual music all neglect
> Monuments of unaging intellect.

—except, and it is an important exception, that evidently the poet would stay in the country of natural processes if he could:

> An aged man is but a paltry thing,
> A ragged coat upon a stick, unless
> Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
> To every tatter in its mortal dress . . .
> And therefore have I sailed the seas and come
> To the golden city of Byzantium.

Recognition of the essential impotence of the natural man is the admitted basis of Hulme's Byzantinism; but Yeats's seems to be pro-

voked by an impotence of the natural man *as* natural man, which is different, and goes rather to discredit Byzantinism as a philosophical attitude. There is another poem of Yeats's which I am tempted to quote: chiefly as bearing on Hulme's philosophy, though at the same time it suggests a comparison of considerable interest—that between the methods by which it seems that Yeats arrives at reflecting in his work the main preoccupations of his contemporaries (as, often quite unexpectedly, he does) and the methods of T. S. Eliot. Evidently the latter owes his representativeness or universality in the first place to a peculiarly wide and undeformed receptivity acting like a mirror—admirably and naturally. Yeats's awarenesses, on the other hand, are certainly not the fruit of systematic exposure and seem not to be the fruit of intensive introspection either, but to have fallen into his lap from Heaven knows where; to have come by magic. And as for their subsequent procedure, eventually Eliot seems to act like a Dutch mirror—if we can imagine one so powerfully and unusually contrived that the contents of a whole room in the reflection merge as it were into a single unit, are reduced as nearly as possible to the condition of potentiality. Yeats's action on the other hand is that of a man gazing into a beryl (here we are on his own terriory) or a crystal: first extracting out of nothing, as far as any other eye can see, and then building up. So the poem which I am about to quote is a fable built up on the thesis that "all thought among us is frozen into something other than (if not actually hostile to) human life."

A doll in the doll-maker's house
Looks at the cradle and bawls:
"That is an insult to us"
But the oldest of all the dolls
Who had seen, being kept for show,
Generations of his sort,
Out-screams the whole shelf: "Although
There's not a man can report
Evil of this place,
The man and the woman bring
Hither to our disgrace,
A noisy and filthy thing."
Hearing him groan and stretch
The doll-maker's wife is aware
Her husband has heard the wretch,

And crouched by the arm of his chair,
She murmurs into his ear,
Head upon shoulder leant:
"My dear, my dear, oh dear,
It was an accident."

It is difficult not to recall Hulme's saying that the especial pleasure that he derives from Epstein's treatment of subjects connected with birth is due to the fact that "generation, which is the very essence of all the organic qualities, is turned into something as hard and durable as a geometrical figure itself." But Hulme makes the admission without misgiving, while Yeats evidently means to imply that the humanity whose intellectual gentility is such that it is shocked by its own method of propagation [1] has got above itself to a degree which is ridiculous. The fable of the enraged dolls is complemented, as the author says, by the fable of the Magi, forms which the poet's eye distinguishes in the blue skies, with

all their helms of silver hovering side by side,
And all their eyes still fixed, hoping to find once more,
Being by Calvary's turbulence unsatisfied
The uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor.

The Magi complement the enraged dolls in the sense that they are engaged in adoring an infant belonging indisputably to another plane of creation, by reason of its divinity, while the dolls are shrinking from the mocking at an infant different from thermselves, by reason of its indisputable reality; (*les ventres peuvent seuls . . .*) it is the unhuman which the dolls prefer to the human; the Magi prefer the super-human. But they too dislike the essentially human to the extent that they prefer the potential to the actual: that the worship of the word in process of incarnation is more congenial to them than the worship of the word subjected thoroughly to the conditions of time and space, *dissolved* as it were into human life. They are "old men of thought" and "all thought among us is frozen into something other than human life." But in the degree to which the old men of thought are Christian their awareness of the discontinuity between the human and the divine is prevented from becoming the consciousness of an antinomy. Much more Byzantinism

[1] Cf. the cry of the shadowy creatures in Apollinaire's *Le Larron:*

"Nous avouons que les grossesses nous émeuvent
Les ventres peuvent seuls nier l'asëité."

and it would begin to quarrel with the dogma of the incarnation; one already feels that Hulme's philosophy moves in that direction. A faith nourished exclusively on the believer's awareness of the discontinuity of the human and the divine must result eventually in a modification of Christianity which can only be called ("Catholicism of despair" is a striking phrase of Eliot's) an Augustinianism of despair.

2

"Le devoir d'imprévoyance"

JACQUES RIVIERE, *Carnets de Captivité.*

"La pensée religieuse ne s'exerce donc que dans l'actuel: pour elle le moment présent ne se résorbe jamais dans une loi qu'il illustrerait simplement; aussi la prière est-elle renouvellement, elle est comme une négation d'expérience. On pourrait dire encore que pour une âme religieuse il n'y a pas de précèdents."

GABRIEL MARCEL, *Journal Métaphysique.*

"Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence
And the descent
Falls the Shadow
For Thine is the Kingdom."

T. S. ELIOT, *The Hollow Men.*

Gerontion is not by any means the best of Eliot's poems, but it is likely to be central to any consideration of the *arrêts,* or if you prefer, of the philosophical content of his poetry. Other facets of the attitude which it describes are found in the early *Portrait of a Lady,* in *The Hollow Men,* in *A Song for Simeon* and in *Animula.* An idea which recurs constantly in Eliot's poems, but most explicitly in *Gerontion,* is that thought is an imitation activity, real neither in the sense that actions which satisfy the importunity of the blood are real, nor in the sense that the activities of the spirit, "step by step climbing the saints' stair," are real. Prufrock, with

The smell of hyacinths across the garden
Recalling things that other people have desired

illustrates the hampering effect which indulgence in the habit of thought has on the animal life, substituting as it does a kind of more or less complicated miming for the simple emotional reaction. So in Ernest Hemingway's novel *Fiesta* one has the impression that Jake, the eunuch hero, has himself to evoke his emotions, that he only reacts, if at all, after he has considered for some time what other people would be feeling in his circumstances.

It is Gerontion, with all his "Think" 's and "Think-now" 's who illustrates most clearly the process of paralysis: anticipation of the future and excogitation of the past producing a complete incapacity to deal with the warm reality; the word become actual, for instance, unswaddled and divided amongst individuals having prefixes, names and idiosyncrasies.

> I that was near your heart was removed therefrom
> To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.
> I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
> Since what is kept must be adulterated?
> I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch
> How should I use it for your closer contact?

That is the climax of the poem, at which life on either level becomes impossible: the only possibility which remains is that of an imitation of existence, in the body but not of it, a thing without cause or result, without root or fruit.

Simeon has a good deal in common with Gerontion, but he is absolved from his principal difficulty. Simeon is not without a test of quality, as Gerontion is: on the contrary, there is a hierarchy at his disposal. So it is possible for him to be aware and certain of his own ignobility: so he is capable of admiring those unlike himself, instead of fearing and distrusting. (*A propos* of Gerontion, it seems to be true that an awareness of the antinomy between the human and the divine will generally present itself as an awareness of the antinomy between the divine and other people.) The trouble is that he knows intimately, in a way which should lead to action, the desirability of a way of life of which self-knowledge, on the other hand, tells him that he is incapable. The divine gift of prophecy is in fact one of the causes of his condition: "After such knowledge, what forgiveness . . ." The coldness, the unadventurousness of his choice deserves the reproach which the shade of Bussy makes to Clermont in Chapman's play:

"Your mind, you say, kept in your flesh's bounds
Shows that men's will should ruled be by their power:
When by true doctrine you are taught to live
Rather without the body than within,
And rather to your God still than yourself."

(Courtesy of the Author and of *Experiment.*)

Thomas McGreevey

Thomas McGreevey is an Irish poet now living in Paris, where he has been a lecturer at the École Normal Supérieure. A friend of Joyce and of Yeats, he is perhaps the only Irish writer who has not been influenced by either; as well as one of the few Irish writers who has kept in touch with the work of Eliot. His poetry is more mature than that of his Irish contemporaries: he is in fact rather older than most of them, and was a Captain of artillery in the war. He is a Nationalist and a Catholic, and contributed an article on the Catholic element in Joyce's Work in Progress *to a recent examination of that work. He has contributed also to* transition *and to* The Irish Statesman.

AODH RUADH O DOMHNAILL

To Stiefan Mac Ennan

Juan de Juni, the priest said
Each J becoming H

Berruguete, he said
And the G was aspirate

Ximenez, he said then
And aspirated first and last

But he never said
And—it seemed odd—he
Never had heard
The aspirated name
Of the centuries-dead
Bright-haired young man
Whose grave I sought.

All day I passed
In greatly built gloom
From dusty gilt tomb
Marvellously wrought
To tomb
Rubbing
At mouldy inscriptions
With fingers wetted with spit
And asking
Where I might find it
And failing

Yet when
Unhurried

Not as at home
Where heroes, hanged, are buried
With non-commissioned officers' bored maledictions
Quickly in the gaol yard

They brought
The blackening body
Here
To rest
Princes came
Walking
Behind it

And all Valladolid knew
And out to Simancas all knew
Where they buried Red Hugh.

Aodh Ruadh O Domhnaill, Red Hugh O'Donnell, Prince of Tyrconaill, *went to ask the help of the King of Spain,* Phillip III, *for Ireland after the battle of Kinsale in* 1601. *He was hospitably received and housed in the castle of Simancas, but an agent of the Queen of England poisoned him. Being a member of the* Third Order of Saint Francis *he was buried in the church of* San Francisco *in* Valladolid *(now destroyed). He was* 31 *years old.*

HOMAGE TO MARCEL PROUST

The sea gleamed blue in the sun
Through the green of the trees
And the talk was of singing.
My mother, dressed in black, recalled a bright image from a song:
Those endearing young charms;
Miss Holly, in heliotrope, a sad line:
And the waves still are singing to the shore.
Then
As we came out from the edge of the wood
The Island was dreaming in the sun across the bridge;
Even the white coastguard station
Had gone, quietly, to sleep—it was Sunday;
A chain on a ship at the pier
Rattled to silence. . . .
Cries of children, playing, sounded faintly
And—oh, musically—somewhere
A young sailor of the Island—

He was tall
And slim
And curled to the moustaches
And he wore ear-rings
But often he was too ill to be at sea—

Was singing
Maid of Athens. . . .

Looking, suddenly, like a goddess
Miss Holly said, half-smiling
"Listen" . . .
And we stopped
In the sunlight
Listening. . . .

The young sailor is dead now.
Miss Holly, also, is dead.
And Byron. . . .
Home they've gone and . . .
And the waves still are singing.

HOMAGE TO JACK YEATS

Grayer than the tide below, the tower;
The day is gray above;
About the walls
A curlew cries, calls;
Rain threatens, west.
This hour
Driving
I thought how this land, so desolate,
Long, long ago was rich in living,
More reckless, consciously, in strife,
More conscious, daring-delicate,
In love.

And then the tower veered
Grayly to me,
Passed.
I meditated,
Feared,
The thought experience sent
That the gold years
Of Limerick life
Might be but consecrated
Lie—
Heroic lives
So often merely meant
The brave stupidities of soldiers,
The proud stupidities of soldiers' wives.

GOLDER'S GREEN

Ich hab' im Traum geweinet

One corpse will go to Saint Lachtin's abbey,
In death you will not miss
Our earth or the rain from our low gray skies—
One to some place like this

To be turned into a little ashes—
And what use hoping for that to find
An instant's rest on your grave
However variously go the wind?

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Edgell Rickword

Edgell Rickword was at Oxford immediately after the war, and it was at that time that he was first noticed, for his prose as well as for his poetry. Since then he has published a number of books of verse, of which the most recent is Invocations to Angels. *His poetry is of great imagic vigour and richness: qualities seen at their best when controlled by his considerable imaginative strength, as in* The Happy New Year. *He has written some very interesting and challenging criticism, including a study of* Rimbaud, *and has edited a book of criticisms by young authors,* Scrutinies, *of great merit.*

THEME FOR THE PSEUDO-FAUSTUS

Faustus, whose high-pitched brow grows in the mirror,
the focus of contemplation, the sacred egg
in which ambition spies the excellent bird
whose parturition shall incinerate
the old world and induce the reign of light,
contrasts the prophecy with circumstance.

The polar desolation of his state,
ringing-in with streets the tawdry wishes built,
contracts existence to the minimum.
Thought veils like lichen the rock-face of fact
whence of delight the burnished ancient orbs
throw fretful rays, sunk deep in raw-rimmed pits;
free creatures whine, hide and shiver in cellars;
viscid emotions merely, like old women
wrapped against winter stepping into cars,
waddle in sequence from each banal function.
The authoritative world holds him still awed,
its splintering props seem staunch, he hears not
the underworking of its ruinous heirs.

For Merlin, master of mystery, spell-numbed,
frets in his green grave and the land stirs;
the lawless spirit faith reported chained,
from low regions rises bright as the sky
before the sun puts out the stars, the Serpent,
casting his sheath, re-diamonded, lifts
the flat axe head against love's wounding heal.
Pride, mobilised in swift sub-human hosts,
the lithe and predatory thought of joy,
invests the earth; but Faustus in his deep dump
doubts of damnation and whimpers to his glass
"The holy egg is addled: we grow old:
there is nothing on earth to do, we are outside life.
Throw up the window? Or throw up the sponge?"

The golden figure of light strides through dawn fields,
the furrowed cloud-land yields the acrid sun;
Morning's thin air floods the streets like fresh blood
in sacrifice to the now-imminent pain,
so all our slaughtered desire takes heart to rise
and lip life's puddle in the dissolving gloom.
The gluey envelope of being swirls
like ink in water and the senses' suit
soon tears to scarecrow flesh whose flapping rags
warn blind earth of certain hovering beaks.
The *I* is bodiless and, a mere stripped nerve
steeped in the culture of aseptic light,
throbs to the rhythm of the lilting rays.
The human concept like a shrivelled husk
rasps its complaint even on the breeze of hope:
"This air is spirit's blood, at every breath
ten generations die, but we remounting
through organizations now remote and stiff
to the quick vigour of the early man,
find no home-comforts by the primitive hearth.
Cock of the midden or flairing garbage-cans,
our brief dawn-crow is muffled in the wet
blanket of history; like a leching frog
caught in mid-rapture under the world's vast turd
we jerk exhausted limbs in endless folds
and stifling, spitting, curiously frustrated,

perish, not budging, with intense exertion."
This too-rare atmosphere flays the slow flesh,
eye-crystals crackle and the racked nerves smart,
sharp tides of pain invade and strain the heart,
oceans of tears sway before us till the blood
blots out that desert sea with its warm stream,
and the *I* retreating down familiar paths
creates defences from the terrible sun
and in its figurative way rebuilds
the altar and the brothel of legitimate state
adjunct, with mean fanes darkening our streets:
the silver-swimming gutters bleach and fade
to sinks and sewers where tarnished spirits lap,
obscenely supine, the stale brink of day.

The demonstrable world remains, whose hordes advance
when wagons over cobbles beat the march
for hurrying feet to gain counter or bench,
and the vague faces query, as they flow,
the pavements, placards, windows for a sign.
Deprived of freedom in time, space and love
they seek enfranchisement in the air beyond
the city's silent rows of gnawing roofs,
expecting joy within the mouth of doom;
drab rotting leaves on life's prevailing wind,
in pain and pleasure glued woman to man,
even in the grave's foul bed—or headstones lie.

Damned by foreknowledge in the crowded hall
the tedious programme promises no end,
heaping fresh items in successive pain,
whirlpools and cataracts of scathing sound,
the sores and running ulcers that consume
the womb of silence and night's patient breast,
unless new instruments evoke release;

the sabotage of all the delicate tools,
the swift insidious wheels, the quiet machines
where the cramped mind weaves endless slave-designs;
the massacre of all the innocent shapes
with tendril-clinging arms and pulpy lips

bastards of hand-grips, spawn of self-distrust;
the desecration of ideal desire;
the violation of the veiled design;
repudiation and the doom of pride,
the death dance on the tight-rope of the will
taut over chaos crammed with serried masks;

naked, and balanced on the brooding void.

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Wishart & Co.)

M. Lyster

M. Lyster is the pen-name of Mrs. Lia Clarke, a well-known Irish short-story writer and poet. A journalist by profession, she was for a long time Viennese correspondent of several English periodicals, and was in Austria almost throughout the war. Her short stories have several times appeared in the year-books. She is the author of the finest modern scurrilous poem, but that is so libellous that it is never likely to be published. She was a regular contributor to The Irish Statesman.

TOKAYO — 1914

"YOU PRONOUNCE that word 'cow'; plough and cow; they're both pronounced the same."

"But they're not spelt the same—cough is called koff."

"It's only June now," said Sophie, breaking in. "We won't be going to Aunt Jette's till August—nearly two months off."

"There is no river near Aunt Jette's," said Max, "and we'll have to leave the dogs, and this house——" He continued with a long litany of all he would have to leave.

"What about Tokayo?" said Ernst. "I'll be sorry to leave him."

As he said this there was a sharp little stirring behind the children. It was Tokayo. He was a beautiful bird. Vivid blues and yellows, oranges and scarlets, warred and flamed against one another and yielded and melted in his feathers. He could recognise his name, and he knew how to say a few sentences, but he was not a parrot that could be described as a talker.

He did not settle himself again immediately in the cage. He did not seem quite content. It was not only the mention of his name

that had roused him. He made little croaking noises and bent his head as if some sound was reaching his little pinpricks of ears from the wall behind his cage.

It was a noise that might have meant that something was eating the wall away inside it, a death watch ticking, or something slowly loosening.

The children of the house (the children of Austria-Este) continued their English lesson.

"It seems very queer that you say 'koff' and not 'ploff,' " said Ernst.

"But English is like that," said Sophie.

Something loosened in the wall just then. It slipped on the other side and fell with a great noise.

"What was that?"

"It's an old sword," said Ernst, looking out. "I think it's one of the Crusaders' swords. There's a big hole in the wall where it fell."

For a second the colour drifted from Sophie's face. But the crisis was over and Tokayo had settled down once more, and his feathers were sleek and content.

"Miss Beckett is coming back!" said Max. "Hurry up and do the verb 'to get' in English."

"It's not Miss Beckett," said Sophie, who had opened the door a little. "It's Marischka."

Sophie was a sharp little girl who took notice of everything that was going on about her: her mother's daughter. She peered through the chink.

"Sit down!" said Max. "What does it matter?"

Outside the door Marischka gave a great scream. She fell down and began crying and muttering. Sophie was frightened and she shut the door noiselessly, but she kept her ear to it.

"She is saying," she reported to her brothers, " 'They must not go to Sarajevo—they must not go—they will be lost. It's bad luck! bad luck!' She's looking at the sword now," whispered Sophie, "but she is afraid to touch it."

The children were silent for several seconds.

"She's a silly thing," said Max, then, bending over his book.

"I wonder," said Ernst, "if we are really going to Aunt Jette's when mammy comes back from Servia."

"Don't you *know,*" said Sophie, looking hard at him, "it will be whatever GRANDUNCLE wishes. It always is."

Just then Tokayo preened his splendid feathers and turned his

almost imperial head, but he bent it immediately again, discovering a hard nut that would be difficult for him to crack.

. . . . .

"Do you mean to say you've never heard the story of the parrot? It's the story of the hour! The Archduke Ferdinand von Este had a parrot that was always saying "Der Alte wird niemals sterben—der Alte wird niemals sterben" (The old one will never die—the old one will never die). Since the news came you can hear everyone in Vienna saying: 'What is the parrot saying now?' "

"This is a real funeral—it's so dark. There must be crowds and crowds of people all the way from here to the station, but one can hardly see anyone except the people near one. And it's so still one could almost hear a pin drop."

"They must have arrived at the station by this."

"Yes, but they won't be here for an hour yet."

"He won't be buried in the Kapuzinergruft—he will be buried with her."

"In the mausoleum in Artstetten, isn't it? He knew he couldn't be buried with the Hapsburgs, so he used to make a joke of it and say that it was too chilly down there in the Capuchin vault, and it would give him a cold."

"Talking of colds, isn't that why the German Emperor didn't come, because he has a cold?"

"Look at the people arriving! That young man driving up is Karl Franz Josef, the present heir, and Valerie and Gisela."

"And what's that?"

"That's to show you it's really Vienna: an old cab going one way and a horse the other, drawing a lopsided General. Do you see how he's going from side to side? He's going to the lying-in-state, too."

"They will soon be here now."

"It was very different after Rudolf's death. How the people loved him!—This man was never popular.—Ah, he had no heart for Vienna—A determined, cold man—Great sense of duty. He didn't want his hand kissed!—And he had such a lot of Czechs about him always."

"But he was fond of her—he gave up so much for her—his children's rights to the throne—everything. He fought hard for her. It was a real love story."

"When he was attacked in Sarajevo didn't she lean forward to shield him?"

"Yes, and the bullet went right through her corset. Prinzip said he had not meant to kill her if she had not put herself in the way."

"They must be coming now. Do you hear the click of the horses' hoofs?"

"They are a long way off yet. One only hears them because it is so still."

"The Emperor has had an unfortunate life—his son, his wife, his heir. When he heard of this he said: 'Nothing has been spared to me.' "

"What about the children of Francis Ferdinand?"

"They were brought to Schönbrunn yesterday afternoon. He saw them, and he is going to provide enough money for them to keep up their rank."

"Look at those men in the old Roman gateway—in black and white with three-cornered hats, on black horses. Their torches are almost steady it is such a calm night."

"That is the funeral procession.—They are coming now.—I believed we would never see them.—I believed the Servians would have attacked them on the way.—Horsemen in black and white, Esturian bodyguard, black and white too, Royal bodyguard, red and white—Soldiers of his regiment—his coffin—Esturians, Royal bodyguard, Soldiers of his regiment—her coffin."

. . . Indeed, the train they had been waiting for had come in and brought the two lonely passengers in their wooden boxes. There was no sound to greet them, nothing except for the little terrifying noises that are in Silence. There was no music at this funeral. Just the steps of those who carried them, and the tick tick of the horses' hoofs, like the tick of a death watch. . . .

Europe was bending her head to listen, for something had loosened. . . . A sword had fallen.

. . . . .

In Artstetten Tokayo was listening, too. Where were his friends? Why was he left so long alone? Food and drink is not everything. He was abandoned in a great fierce silence.

He listened again. Perhaps this was Ernst coming back. He lifted his almost imperial head. He preened his splendid feathers and was about to croak an adoring greeting.

"Is that *the* parrot?" said the stranger.

"Yes—that's the parrot."

Tokayo's eyes flamed red—his feathers rose in anger.

"He only talks a little."
They passed on—Tokayo drooped in his cage.

(Courtesy of the Author and of *The Irish Statesman.*)

D. H. Lawrence

D. H. Lawrence, who was born in 1885 in a mining village in Derbyshire, and died in 1930, was the outstanding novelist of the generation; as well as an original and considerable poet. He made a reputation with his first novel, The White Peacock, *published in 1911; and published continuously from that time until his death. Outstanding among his prose writings are* Sons and Lovers, Women in Love, Aaron's Rod; *and a number of remarkable short stories, of which should be mentioned* The Thorn in the Flesh, Samson and Delilah, Mother and Daughter. *His writing is of a great sincerity and intensity, and these qualities often give his style the appearance of crudeness: nevertheless he wrote, at his best, prose of great beauty; some of this best is in* Lady Chatterley's Lover. *His poetry has not received the attention it deserves: it derives from the Imagists with whom he was connected, but it has a rhythmic strength original in English poetry because it does not depend upon an inflection of the blank verse line. There is an excellent criticism of his method in I. A. Richard's* Science and Poetry.

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER

Chapter II

Connie and Clifford came home to Wragby in the autumn of 1920. Miss Chatterley, still disgusted at her brother's defection, had departed and was living in a little flat in London.

Wragby was a long low old house in brown stone, begun about the middle of the eighteenth century, and added on to, till it was a warren of a place without much distinction. It stood on an eminence in a rather fine old park of oak trees, but alas, one could see in the near distance the chimney of Tevershall pit, with its clouds of steam and smoke, and on the damp, hazy distance of the hill the raw straggle of Tevershall village, a village which began almost at the park gates, and trailed in utter hopeless ugliness for a long and gruesome mile: houses, rows of wretched, small, be-

grimed, brick houses, with black slate roofs for lids, sharp angles and wilful, blank dreariness.

Connie was accustomed to Kensington or the Scotch hills or the Sussex downs: that was her England. With the stoicism of the young she took in the utter, soulless ugliness of the coal-and-iron Midlands at a glance, and left it at what it was: unbelievable and not to be thought about. From the rather dismal rooms at Wragby she heard the rattle-rattle of the screens at the pit, the puff of the winding-engine, the clink-clink of shunting trucks, and the hoarse little whistle of the colliery locomotives. Tavershall pit-bank was burning, had been burning for years, and it would cost thousands to put it out. So it had to burn. And when the wind was that way, which was often, the house was full of the stench of this sulphurous combustion of the earth's excrement. But even on windless days the air always smelt of something under-earth: sulphur, iron, coal, or acid. And even on the Christmas roses the smuts settled persistently, incredible, like black manna from skies of doom.

Well, there it was: fated like the rest of things! It was rather awful, but why kick? You couldn't kick it away. It just went on. Life, like all the rest! On the low dark ceiling of cloud at night red blotches burned and quavered, dappling and swelling and contracting, like burns that give pain. It was the furnaces. At first they fascinated Connie with a sort of horror; she felt she was living underground. Then she got used to them. And in the morning it rained.

Clifford professed to like Wragby better than London. This country had a grim will of its own, and the people had guts. Connie wondered what else they had: certainly neither eyes nor minds. The people were as haggard, shapeless, and dreary as the countryside, and as unfriendly. Only there was something in their deep-mouthed slurring of the dialect, and the thresh-thresh of their hob-nailed pit-boots as they trailed home in gangs on the asphalt from work, that was terrible and a bit mysterious.

There had been no welcome home for the young squire, no festivities, no deputation, not even a single flower. Only a dank ride in a motor-car up a dark, damp drive, burrowing through gloomy trees, out to the slope of the park where grey damp sheep were feeding, to the knoll where the house spread its dark brown facade, and the house-keeper and her husband were hovering, like unsure tenants on the face of the earth, ready to stammer a welcome.

There was no communication between Wragby Hall and Tever-

shall village, none. No caps were touched, no curtseys bobbed. The colliers merely stared; the tradesmen lifted their caps to Connie as to an acquaintance, and nodded awkwardly to Clifford; that was all. Gulf impassable, and a quiet sort of resentment on either side. At first Connie suffered from the steady drizzle of resentment that came from the village. Then she hardened herself to it, and it became a sort of tonic, something to live up to. It was not that she and Clifford were unpopular, they merely belonged to another species altogether from the colliers. Gulf impassable, breach indescribable, such as is perhaps non-existent south of the Trent. But in the Midlands and the industrial North gulf impassable, across which no communication could take place. You stick to your side, I'll stick to mine! A strange denial of the common pulse of humanity.

Yet the village sympathised with Clifford and Connie in the abstract. In the flesh it was—You leave me alone!—on either side.

The rector was a nice man of about sixty, full of his duty, and reduced, personally, almost to a nonentity by the silent—You leave me alone!—of the village. The miners' wives were nearly all Methodists. The miners were nothing. But even so much official uniform as the clergyman wore was enough to obscure entirely the fact that he was a man like any other man. No, he was Mister Ashby, a sort of automatic preaching and praying concern.

This stubborn, instinctive—We think ourselves as good as you, if you *are* Lady Chatterley!—puzzled and baffled Connie at first extremely. The curious, suspicious, false amiability with which the miners' wives met her overtures; the curiously offensive tinge of—Oh dear me! I *am* somebody now, with Lady Chatterley talking to me! But she needn't think I'm not as good as her for all that!—which she always heard twanging in the women's half-fawning voices, was impossible. There was no getting past it. It was hopelessly and offensively nonconformist.

Clifford left them alone, and she learnt to do the same: she just went by without looking at them, and they stared as if she were a walking wax figure. When he had to deal with them, Clifford was rather haughty and contemptuous; one could no longer afford to be friendly. In fact he was altogether rather supercilious and contemptuous of anyone not in his own class. He stood his ground, without any attempt at conciliation. And he was neither liked or disliked by the people: he was just part of things, like the pit-bank and Wragby itself.

But Clifford was really extremely shy and self-conscious now he

was lamed. He hated seeing anyone except just the personal servants. For he had to sit in a wheeled chair or a sort of bath-chair. Nevertheless he was just as carefully dressed as ever, by his expensive tailors, and he wore the careful Bond Street neckties just as before, and from the top he looked just as smart and impressive as ever. He had never been one of the modern ladylike young men: rather bucolic even, with his ruddy face and broad shoulders. But his very quiet, hesitating voice, and his eyes, at the same time bold and frightened, assured and uncertain, revealed his nature. His manner was often offensively supercilious, and then again modest and self-effacing, almost tremulous.

Connie and he were attached to one another, in the aloof modern way. He was much too hurt in himself, the great shock of his maiming, to be easy and flippant. He was a hurt thing. And as such Connie stuck to him passionately.

But she could not help feeling how little connection he really had with people. The miners were, in a sense, his own men; but he saw them as objects rather than men, parts of the pit rather than parts of life, crude raw phenomena rather than human beings along with him. He was in some way afraid of them, he could not bear to have them look at him now he was lame. And their queer, crude life seemed as unnatural as that of hedgehogs.

He was remotely interested; but like a man looking down a microscope, or up a telescope. He was not in touch. He was not in actual touch with anybody, save, traditionally, with Wragby, and, through the close bond of family defence, with Emma. Beyond this nothing really touched him. Connie felt that she herself didn't really, not really touch him; perhaps there was nothing to get at ultimately; just a negation of human contact.

Yet he was absolutely dependent on her, he needed her every moment. Big and strong as he was, he was helpless. He could wheel himself about in a wheeled chair, and he had a sort of bath-chair with a motor attachment, in which he could puff slowly round the park. But alone he was like a lost thing. He needed Connie to be there, to assure him he existed at all.

Still he was ambitious. He had taken to writing stories; curious, very personal stories about people he had known. Clever, rather spiteful, and yet, in some mysterious way, meaningless. The observation was extraordinary and peculiar. But there was no touch, no actual contact. It was as if the whole thing took place in a vacuum. And since the field of life is largely an artificially-lighted stage

today, the stories were curiously true to modern life, to the modern psychology, that is.

Clifford was almost morbidly sensitive about these stories. He wanted everyone to think them good, of the best, ne plus ultra. They appeared in the most modern magazines, and were praised and blamed as usual. But to Clifford the blame was torture, like knives goading him. It was as if the whole of his being were in his stories.

Connie helped him as much as she could. At first she was thrilled. He talked everything over with her monotonously, insistently, persistently, and she had to respond with all her might. It was as if her whole soul and body and sex had to rouse up and pass into these stories of his. This thrilled her and absorbed her.

Of physical life they lived very little. She had to superintend the house. But the housekeeper had served Sir Geoffrey for many years, and the dried-up, elderly, superlatively correct female . . . you could hardly call her a parlour-maid, or even a woman . . . who waited at table, had been in the house for forty years. Even the very housemaids were no longer young. It was awful! What could you do with such a place, but leave it alone! All these endless rooms that nobody used, all the Midlands routine, the mechanical cleanliness and the mechanical order! Clifford had insisted on a new cook, an experienced woman who had served him in his rooms in London. For the rest the place seemed run by mechanical anarchy. Everything went on in pretty good order, strict cleanliness, and strict punctuality; even pretty strict honesty. And yet, to Connie, it was a methodical anarchy. No warmth of feeling united it organically. The house seemed as dreary as a disused street.

What could she do but leave it alone . . .? So she left it alone. Miss Chatterley came sometimes, with her aristocratic thin face, and triumphed, finding nothing altered. She would never forgive Connie for ousting her from her union in consciousness with her brother. It was she, Emma, who should be bringing forth the stories, these books, with him; the Chatterley stories, something new in the world, that *they,* the Chatterleys, had put there. There was no other standard. There was no organic connection with the thought and expression that had gone before. Only something new in the world: the Chatterley books, entirely personal.

Connie's father, when he paid a flying visit to Wragby, said in private to his daughter: As for Clifford's writing, it's smart, but there's nothing in it. It won't last! . . . Connie looked at the burly

Scottish knight who had done himself well all his life, and her eyes, her big, still-wondering blue eyes became vague. Nothing in it! What did he mean by *nothing in it?* If the critics praised it, and Clifford's name was almost famous, and it even brought in money . . . what did her father mean by saying there was nothing in Clifford's writing? What else could there be?

For Connie had adopted the standard of the young: what there was in the moment was everything. And moments followed one another without necessarily belonging to one another.

It was in her second winter at Wragby her father said to her: "I hope, Connie, you won't let circumstances force you into being a demi-vierge."

"A demi-vierge!" replied Connie vaguely. "Why? Why not?"

"Unless you like it, of course!" said her father hastily. To Clifford he said the same, when the two men were alone: "I'm afraid it doesn't quite suit Connie to be a demi-vierge."

"A half-virgin!" replied Clifford, translating the phrase to be sure of it.

He thought for a moment, then flushed very red. He was angry and offended.

"In what way doesn't it suit her?" he asked stiffly.

"She's getting thin . . . angular. It's not her style. She's not the pilchard sort of little slip of a girl, she's a bonny Scotch trout."

"Without the spots, of course!" said Clifford.

He wanted to say something later to Connie about the demi-vierge business . . . the half-virgin state of her affairs. But he could not bring himself to do it. He was at once too intimate with her and not intimate enough. He was so very much at one with her, in his mind and hers, but bodily they were non-existent to one another, and neither could bear to drag in the corpus delicti. They were so intimate, and utterly out of touch.

Connie guessed, however, that her father had said something, and that something was in Clifford's mind. She knew that he didn't mind whether she were demi-vierge or demi-monde, so long as he didn't absolutely know, and wasn't made to see. What the eye doesn't see and the mind doesn't know, doesn't exist.

Connie and Clifford had now been nearly two years at Wragby, living their vague life of absorption in Clifford and his work. Their interests had never ceased to flow together over his work. They talked and wrestled in the throes of composition, and felt as if something were happening, really happening, really in the void.

And thus far it was a life: in the void. For the rest it was non-existence. Wragby was there, the servants . . . but spectral, not really existing. Connie went for walks in the park, and in the woods that joined the park, and enjoyed the solitude and the mystery, kicked the brown leaves of autumn, and picked the primroses of spring. But it was all a dream; or rather it was like the simulacrum of reality. The oak-leaves were to her like oak-leaves seen ruffling in a mirror, she herself was a figure somebody had read about, picking primroses that were only shadows or memories, or words. No substance to her or anything . . . no touch, no contact! Only this life with Clifford, this endless spinning of webs of yarn, of the minutiae of consciousness, these stories Sir Malcolm said there was nothing in, and they wouldn't last. Why should there be anything in them, why should they last? Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Sufficient unto the moment, is the *appearance* of reality.

Clifford had quite a number of friends, acquaintances really, and he invited them to Wragby. He invited all sorts of people, critics and writers, people who would help to praise his books. And they were flattered at being asked to Wragby, and they praised. Connie understood it all perfectly. But why not? This was one of the fleeting patterns in the mirror. What was wrong with it?

She was hostess to these people . . . mostly men. She was hostess also to Clifford's occasional aristocratic relations. Being a soft, ruddy, country-looking girl, inclined to freckles, with big blue eyes, and curling, brown hair, and a soft voice, and rather strong, female loins she was considered a little old-fashioned and "womanly." She was not a "little pilchard sort of fish," like a boy, with a boy's flat breast and little buttocks. She was too feminine to be quite smart.

So the men, especially those no longer young, were very nice to her indeed. But, knowing what torture poor Clifford would feel at the slightest sign of flirting on her part, she gave them no encouragement at all. She was quiet and vague, she had no contact with them and intended to have none. Clifford was extraordinarily proud of himself.

His relatives treated her quite kindly. She knew that the kindliness indicated a lack of fear, and that these people had no respect for you unless you could frighten them a little. But again she had no contact. She let them be kindly and disdainful, she let them feel they had no need to draw their steel in readiness. She had no real connection with them.

Time went on. Whatever happened, nothing happened, because

she was so beautifully out of contact. She and Clifford lived in their ideas and his books. She entertained . . . there were always people in the house. Time went on as the clock does, half-past eight instead of half-past seven.

T. S. Eliot

T. S. Eliot was born in 1888 in the United States, but has lived for many years in England and is a British citizen. He was originally a member of the Fugitives *group. His poetry combines a perfect and original craftsmanship with an undeformed, contemporary receptivity, both ordered by a great intelligence. These have given it from the beginning a quality of permanence not common among young writers. Nevertheless recognition has come to him only slowly, and his position as a major modern poet was not established until the publication of* The Waste Land *in 1921. The poem is foreshadowed in* Gerontion; *and is, alike in achievement and in influence, the outstanding work of modern poetry. Since its publication Eliot has published less poetry than before, and that of a more pronounced devotional character; as in the book* Ash Wednesday. *His previous work is collected in* Poems 1909–1925.

Eliot's work as a poet has been supplemented by his critical writing, most of which is collected in The Sacred Wood *and* For Lancelot Andrewes. *This has had even more pronounced an influence than his poetry, and has given a valuable direction to contemporary criticism.*

Eliot has kept closely in touch with modern writing, French as well as English. Recently he has published a translation of St. John Perse's Anabase, *an edition of the poems of Ezra Pound, and a book on Dante. He is editor of* The Criterion; *and describes himself as "classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and anglo-catholic in religion."*

GERONTION

Thou hast nor youth nor age
But as it were an after dinner sleep
Dreaming of both.

Here I am, an old man in a dry month,
Being read to by a boy, waiting for rain.

I was neither at the hot gates
Nor fought in the warm rain
Nor knee deep in the salt marsh, heaving a cutlass,
Bitten by flies, fought.
My house is a decayed house,
And the Jew squats on the window sill, the owner,
Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp,
Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London.
The goat coughs at night in the field overhead;
Rocks, moss, stonecrop, iron, merds.
The woman keeps the kitchen, makes tea,
Sneezes at evening, poking the peevish gutter.

I an old man,
A dull head among windy spaces.

Signs are taken for wonders. "We would see a sign"!
The word within a word, unable to speak a word,
Swaddled with darkness. In the juvescence of the year
Came Christ the tiger

In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut, flowering judas,
To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk
Among whispers; by Mr. Silvero
With caressing hands, at Limoges
Who walked all night in the next room;

By Hakagawa, bowing among the Titians;
By Madame de Tornquist, in the dark room
Shifting the candles; Fräulein von Kulp
Who turned in the hall, one hand on the door. Vacant shuttles
Weave the wind. I have no ghosts,
An old man in a draughty house
Under a windy knob.

After such knowledge, what forgiveness? Think now
History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors
And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,
Guides us by vanities. Think now
She gives when our attention is distracted
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions

That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late
What's not believed in, or if still believed,
In memory only, reconsidered passion. Gives too soon
Into weak hands, what's thought can be dispensed with
Till the refusal propagates a fear. Think
Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices
Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues
Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.
These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree.

The tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours. Think at last
We have not reached conclusion, when I
Stiffen in a rented house. Think at last
I have not made this show purposelessly
And it is not by any concitation
Of the backward devils.
I would meet you upon this honestly.
I that was near your heart was removed therefrom
To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.
I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
Since what is kept must be adulterated?
I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch:
How should I use it for your closer contact?

These with a thousand small deliberations
Protract the profit, of their chilled delirium,
Excite the membrane, when the sense has cooled,
With pungent sauces, multiply variety
In a wilderness of mirrors. What will the spider do,
Suspend its operations, will the weevil
Delay? De Bailhache, Fresca, Mrs. Cammel, whirled
Beyond the circuit of the shuddering Bear
In fractured atoms. Gull against the wind, in the windy straits
Of Belle Isle, or running on the Horn,
White feathers in the snow, the Gulf claims,
And an old man driven by the Trades
To a sleepy corner.

Tenants of the house,
Thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season.

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Faber & Faber.)

A SONG FOR SIMEON

Lord, the Roman hyacinths are blooming in bowls and
The winter sun creeps by the snow hills;
The stubborn season has made stand.
My life is light, waiting for the death wind,
Like a feather on the back of my hand.
Dust in sunlight and memory in corners
Wait for the wind that chills towards the dead land.

Grant us thy peace.
I have walked many years in this city,
Kept faith and fast, provided for the poor,
Have given and taken honour and ease.
There went never any rejected from my door.
Who shall remember my house, where shall live my children's children
When the time of sorrow is come?
They will take to the goat's path, and the fox's home,
Fleeing from the foreign faces and the foreign swords.

Before the time of cords and scourges and lamentation
Grant us thy peace.

Before the stations of the mountain of desolation,
Before the certain hour of maternal sorrow,
Now at this birth season of decease,
Let the Infant, the still unspeaking and unspoken Word,
Grant Israel's consolation
To one who has eighty years and no to-morrow.

According to thy word.
They shall praise Thee and suffer in every generation
With glory and derision,
Light upon light, mounting the saints' stair.
Not for me the martyrdom, the ecstasy of thought and prayer,
Not for me the ultimate vision.
Grant me thy peace.
(And a sword shall pierce thy heart,
Thine also.)
I am tired with my own life and the lives of those after me,

I am dying in my own death and the deaths of those after me.
Let thy servant depart,
Having seen thy salvation.

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Faber & Faber.)

JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.'
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
There we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Faber & Faber.)

Dorothy M. Richardson

Dorothy Richardson is a distinguished English novelist whose work should be better known. She is a deliberate and original writer, working in a psychological tradition in which these are uncommon qualities. Pilgrimage, *a series of novels, began to be published in 1915 with* Pointed Roofs. *Nine volumes have appeared, the most recent being* Oberland: *others are:* Honeycomb, The Tunnel *and* Revolving Lights. *Her work is better known to French critics, and has been well estimated in Abel Chevalley's* Le Roman Anglais. *There is also an English essay on it by J. C. Powys. She has contributed to* The Adelphi *and most of the literary periodicals.*

ORDEAL

When the taxi stopped, Agatha jumped out and gave the man money evidently held ready in her hand all the way, and probably too much, to avoid a halt.

And when the lady-in-charge asked if she were to send any telegrams, Agatha lost her head and stumbled over the address. Fan saw clearly then into her mind, the images it had held while she had talked so glibly in the cab.

In the hall she was even more un-nerving. Really it was helpless of her, just before her farewell hug, to let her eyes stray and find a nurse happening to pass, and recoil. Result of her recent too-strenuous mental exercise. Truly it was a blessing she was not coming upstairs. . . .

Before Fan could recover from the spectacle of Agatha departing to suffer all that her simple imagination and her inarticulateness in combination could force upon her, the lady-in-charge caught her with a remark to which she responded almost in Agatha's manner; rushing wastefully outside herself into an obedient caricature of the speaker: in this case brusque and preoccupied, the fashion of one with mind alert and eyes all round the head. And was obliged, since the maid, appeared at her side to take her suit-case, had been a witness, to keep to this manner when she stepped out of the lift almost into the arms of a tall Sister behind whom was waiting a short nurse.

She felt herself a guest being passed from hand to hand without release: being entertained. And indeed, for a moment, by each fresh face and fresh immediately revealed personality, she *was* entertained. But she could not flatter herself into believing that these entertaining officials were themselves entertained. For them each visible hair of her head did not, as did theirs for her, stand out, a single separate mystery. If they felt anything at all it was relief, in finding that number seven had at her disposal as much manner as they. Their planned continuous engagement of her attention was very "psychological." Horribly wise; feminine. It had created for her a miniature past in this house and when presently she was shut up alone in her room, undressing, she did not feel a stranger there. The room had stated itself while she was talking with the sister and nurse and was now a known room. It seemed long ago that Agatha had gone away through the hall.

She had thought in advance that her sense of personal life must cease when she entered the door of the nursing-home. But instead it was intensified. As if, brought up against a barrier from behind which no certain future poured into it, her life flowed back upon itself embarrassing her with its vivid palpitation. Her known self, thus arrested, was making all its statements at once. The most welcome was its cheerfulness, inexplicable, and as little expected as the wise-seeming state of composure that had risen unsummoned, during the last two days, like a veil between herself and her knowledge of her lack of courage. That was negative, acceptance of the inevitable. But there was nothing negative in this deep good-cheer that made her smile as she hung up her garments in a wardrobe, perhaps for the last time. It was not stoicism. It might be unconscious organic certainty of getting through. In her conscious mind was no certainty but that of the life-risk. Perhaps that itself was the invigorating

factor. Whatever its cause this present intensity of being made the possible future look like a shallow expanse; something very easy to sacrifice if she considered only herself. And those others out in life seemed now to call for solicitude only because they did not know how strange was the being in which they were immersed.

Very carefully she arranged her hair, firmly putting in extra pins, being back while she did so within the final moments of arranging herself for parties in her girlhood. And all the time the lugubrious thoughts and anticipations belonging to the occasion, and so fertile in her mind a week ago, seemed hovering in the background seeking in vain for space to intervene.

The short nurse brought the cup of thin soup that was breakfast and lunch, left hurriedly, promising to come back in a moment, and came, with her already so well-known way of opening the door: a quiet wide flourish that showed the whole of her at once, arm outstretched by hand holding door-knob.

They were all trained of course, Fan reflected, not to sneak into rooms: "Open the door wide, *so,* come in through the centre of the doorway and face at once *towards* the patient, close the door quietly behind you and advance, making a cheerful remark."

"Well? How are we?" the nurse had said and paused in the middle of the room as if offering herself only as a momentary spectacle.

"Quite happy for the present. Are you going to stay with me for a bit?"

"I can't," she said, "I've got to attend to No. 8," and perceived the tray and came forward to take it. "You've got to sleep now, till I come for you at five." This then was farewell to humanity on this side of the barrier. Fan asked leave to smoke, a single cigarette. While giving permission the nurse got herself to the door and away as if hurriedly, as if driven, and in a moment Fan heard her voice asking cheerful questions in the next room. The replies came in a moaning monotone.

There was chattering in an open-doored room near by. Dining-room, common-room of nurses on duty on this floor of the great house where they earned their livings amidst pain and death. Whirring of the lift. Footsteps. Gushing of water into a basin. Swift rinsing, more gushing of water.

The sounds brought vivid images that ought, she felt, to be shocking and rousing her to resist their suggestive power. But they passed through her mind without attaining her. Between them and

the centre of her attention was something that had been waiting within the quietude of the room for its moment. Approaching now, as she sat back against the raised pillows and set down her book, with the note for Tom sticking out of it like a book-marker, on the table at her side with cigarette-case and matches. These doings seemed the preliminaries to an interview.

A week ago, this moment of being left alone to wait for the summons had drawn her forward into itself and kept her there. She recalled the shock of finding the life all about her no longer her concern, the cold dry horror of the prospect of getting through the days and playing her part. And how at times with an effort she had forced herself out of her trance, dropped her own cancelled life and felt each life about her, sharply, disinterestedly, seeing each one in its singleness to be equally significant; been aware of a strange sure wisdom within her that seemed capable of administering the affairs of everyone she knew, guiding each life without offence. Had realised at one moment with an overwhelming clarity how it is that the character of an individual operates more securely, upon those who have known him, after he is dead. But for the last two days she had longed for this moment and the relief it would bring.

It was like being in open spaces, in solitude. She rejoiced that she had decided not to tell Tom. This strange, familiar intimation all about her owed the power that was about to overwhelm to her undivided solitude. Agatha, going, had gone utterly. If Tom had known, his suffering presence would have been in the room with her. She was severed, even from Tom. With a deep, blissful sigh she felt all the tensions of her life relax. She was back again in the freedom of her own identity, in pre-marriage freedom, in more than childhood's freedom, with all the strength of her maturity to savour its joy. In bright daylight the afternoon lay before her, endless: *the first holiday of her adult life. . . .*

Laughing softly and luxuriously, beside herself with the joy of this complete return she looked gratefully about at the features of the ugly, barely-furnished room and lit the permitted cigarette. The act of smoking threw her back, to the minute before last. It was occupation, distraction, waste of priceless opportunity, of time. No. Of something that was more than time. It was cutting her off from her deep life. It was unnecessary, because now she was back in her pre-smoking state of existence, and it had brought her to the present surfaces, away from the state of being into which she had just plunged. She crushed the burning end upon the match-box. The

edge of that first blissful expansion was blunted, but the fruit of its moments lay in her thoughts and in her refreshed, delighted limbs and in her recognition of the way the hint of tobacco-smoke upon the air enhanced the familiar, remembered surrounding freshness that was like that of a dewy garden in the early morning. All about her, emanating from her relaxed mind, was all the garden and countryside beauty she had ever known, its concentrated essence, so that what she saw was not any single distinct scene but a hovering and mingling of them all: their visible spirit which was one with her own.

If this blissful state were the gift of the holiday from responsibility and from the tension of human relationships that only the chance of death had had the power to give her, then perhaps the perfect certainty of death must always bring it at the last? Perhaps people who were engaged in doing their dying were enjoying, behind even the most awful of the outward appearances, at the end of the exciting, absorbing struggle that prevented them from communicating their thoughts, the sense of being in its perfect fulness. . . .

. . . . .

She put down the book to question, as if it were a person with her in the room, the fact that she had forgotten, in the intensity of her absorption in *Green Mansions,* what lay ahead. The experience had been a fresh voyage of discovery into unchanged, underlying, timeless *reality.*

But with the book lying there closed, the sense of passing time came back. Her watch said half-past four. In half-an-hour . . .

The door opened upon the Sister almost ostentatiously displaying a hypodermic syringe. What hospital trick was this, sprung, without warning.

"Your nurse is in the theatre, so I've come for this little job."

"What litle job? What's the mystery in the syringe?"

"No mystery," smiled the Sister, slipping the jacket from Fan's arm. "We always give this before the theatre."

Theatre, theatre, theatre, absurd unsuitable word, for the reality now near at hand and to remain excluding all else for half-an-hour, an eternity, after the sister had gone.

"It prevents bleeding," said the steady, lying voice below eyes that looked serenely through the window as the syringe pricked home.

"I'd have gone quietly," said Fan resentfully.

"I daresay you would. But now you'll be happy for a quarter of an hour before nurse comes." She spoke sternly, but finished with a smile; but the gleeful smile of one who outwits a naughty child. Brush, between two women. Managers. All women are managers. That's why they daren't give in to each other. That's why . . . The nurse had gone. A quarter of an hour. Watch slow. This was some kind of drug. Stupefier. *Very* psychological. But that's why, I was saying . . . Thoughts would not come.

Her effort to call up a picture of the theatre brought only a confused sliding together of images in a mind that could not hold them. Oh, *very* psychological. Perhaps they were wise. She could not decide. Would have liked to go down in full possession of all her senses, yet was grateful for this not unpleasant numbness.

With the nurse at her side she was walking down a shallow flight of stairs. Towards death . . . life? At the bottom of the stairs was another nurse who greeted her as she passed and whose greeting she returned. A turning to the left, another nurse in the offing standing like a sentry at an open door, who also said "Good afternoon," and had to be answered. This was the theatre. Not yet quite. A corridor leading to the theatre's arched doorway, but giving no vista. The nurse was behind now. She was going forward alone, quite clear-headed and very mater of fact, not needing this careful passing from hand to hand. . . . In the doorway she was greeted by yet another nurse standing away to the right, leading her on with her dreadful "Good afternoon." Oh, *too* psychological. Farcical. She was round the bend. Here it was, the lofty room, the white-clad forms, high windows open, no smell of anaesthetic or of disinfectant. Trees, beyond the window.

Which still she could see as she lay: belonging, completing.

"Breathe quite naturally, Mrs. Peele."

Fresh and powerful came the volatile essences, playing in the air before her nostrils like a fountain. Her heart answered, her blood answered. But not herself. Desperately and quite independently her threatened heart fought against this power that was bearing her down. She raised her hands to still it.

"Clasp your hands."

All of herself was in her clasped hands, beating, throbbing. Less, and less, and . . . less . . .

(Courtesy of the Author.)

William Empson

William Empson is the best-known of the young English poets. He is a graduate of Cambridge, where he was for a short time a bifellow of Magdalene College; and was with Bronowski one of the founders and first editors of Experiment. *His verse is metaphysical, and has been influenced by the Metaphysical Poets. Characteristic of it are a rhythmic vigour and a pre-occupation with images drawn from astronomy which Empson studied: also a deliberate "ambiguity," usually in the form of multiple meanings. His critical writing, which is detailed and has been directed by his friendship with I. A. Richards, is for the most part concerned with this subject of poetic* Ambiguity *on which he is about to publish a book. Extracts from this have appeared in* Experiment: *he has also contributed to* The Criterion.

TO AN OLD LADY

Ripeness is all; her in her cooling planet
Revere; do not presume to think her wasted.
Project her no projectile, plan nor man it;
Gods cool in turn, by the sun long outlasted.

Our earth alone given no name of god
Gives, too, no hold for such a leap to aid her;
Landing, you break some palace and seem odd.
Bees sting their need, the keeper's queen invader.

Go, to your telescope; spy out the land;
Watch while her ritual is still to see,
Still stand her temples emptying in the sand
Whose waves o'erthrew their crumbled tracery;

Still stand uncalled-on her soul's appanage;
Much social detail whose successor fades,
Wit used to run a house and to play Bridge,
And tragic fervour, to dismiss her maids.

Years her precession do not throw from year.
She reads a compass certain of her pole;
Confident, finds no confines on her sphere,
Whose failing crops are in her sole control.

Stars how much further from me fill my night,
Strange that she too should be inaccessible
Who shares my sun. He curtains her from sight,
And but in darkness is she visible.

(Courtesy of the Author and of The Hogarth Press.)

POEM

The proper scale would pat you on the head
But Alice showed her pup Ulysses' bough
Well from behind a thistle, wise with dread;

And though your gulf-sprung mountains I allow
(Snow-puppy curves, rose-solemn dado band)
Charming for nurse, I am not nurse just now.

Why pat or stride them, when the train will land
Me high, through climbing tunnels, at your side,
And careful fingers meet through castle sand.

Claim slyly rather that the tunnels hide
Solomon's gems, white vistas, preserved kings,
By jackal sandhole to your air flung wide.

Say (she suspects) to sea Nile only brings
Delta and indecision, who instead
Far back up country does enormous things.

(Courtesy of the Author and of *Experiment.*)

VILLANELLE

It is the pain, it is the pain, endures.
Your chemic beauty burned my muscles through.
Poise of my hands reminded me of yours.

What later purge from this deep toxin cures?
What kindness now could the old salve renew?
It is the pain, it is the pain, endures.

The infection slept (custom or change inures)
And when pain's secondary phase was due
Poise of my hands reminded me of yours.

How safe I felt, whom memory assures,
Rich that your grace safely by heart I knew.
It is the pain, it is the pain, endures.

My stare drank deep beauty that still allures,
My heart pumps yet the poison draught of you.
Poise of my hands reminded me of yours.

You are still kind whom the same shape immures.
Kind, and beyond adieu. We miss our cues.
It is the pain, it is the pain, endures.
Poise of my hands reminded me of yours.

(Courtesy of the Author and of The Hogarth Press.)

CAMPING OUT

And now she cleans her teeth into the lake:
Gives it (God's grace) for her own bounty's sake
What morning's pale and the crisp mist debars:
Its glass of the divine (that Will could break)
Restores, beyond Nature: or lets Heaven take
(Itself being dimmed) her pattern, who half awake
Milks between rocks a straddled sky of stars.

Soap tension the star pattern magnifies.
Smoothly Madonna through-assumes the skies
Whose vaults are opened to achieve the Lord.
No, it is we soaring explore galaxies;
Our bullet boat light's speed by thousands flies.
Who moves so among stars their frame unties,
See where they blur, and die, and are outsoared.

(Courtesy of the Author and *Experiment.*)

PART OF MANDEVIL'S TRAVELS

Chapter 87: "Of the faith and beliefe of Prester John, but he hath not all the full beliefe as we have"

DONE INTO VERSE, WITH COMMENT

"I feel half an Englishman already"
KING AMMANULLAH after firing off a torpedo

Mandevil's river of dry jewels grows
Day-cycled, deathly, and iron-fruited trees;
From Paradise it runs to Pantarose
And with great waves into the gravely seas.

(Olympe, and Paradise Terrestre the same
(Whence, bent to improve, King Alleluiah came)
High (Higher, in fact, as Milton boasted) hurled
Clings to the cold slates of the Roof of the World.)

Spears pierce its desert basin, the long dawn:
Tower, noon, all cliquant, dock-side cranes, sag-fruited:
And, sand-born weight, brief by waste sand upborne,
Leave, gulfed, ere night, the bare plain, deeper rooted.

(Herr Trinckler, there of late, reports of these—
A million acres of dead poplar trees.[1]
Well may new pit-heads to wise A appeal;
Our desolation is of harsher steel.)

Antred, of malachite, its boulders thunder:
Involve their cataracts, one known week-end:
Then, deep, a labyrinth of landslides, under
The gravely sea, and seen no more, descend.

(It is cracked mud the motor service dints;
Five days, diluvian, covered some chipped flints.
Tour well the slag-heaps, royalty, we own
The arid sowing, the tumultuous stone.)

[1] *The Times*, 29 September, 1928.

Fish of another fashion the dry sea
Ride: can blast through eddies, and sail on:
Can rend the hunters whose nets drag the scree:
Are full good savour: are for Prester John.

(Paradise, like Bohemia, has no coast;
Of bombs and bowlers it has power to boast,
But mail-dark fish, spawned in grit-silted grotto,
Adam comes here for; and recites my motto.)

(Courtesy of the Author and of *Experiment.*)

James Joyce

James Joyce is the dominating figure of contemporary writing in English. He was born in Dublin in 1882, studied at Trinity College, and has since lived in France and Italy. His first book of prose was a collection of short stories, Dubliners, *published in 1914, which shows a subtle development of psychology; he then published an autobiographical book,* Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, *a profound study of adolescence and stylistically an outstanding achievement. The promise of these two books he fulfilled in* Ulysses. Ulysses *is a monument of the contemporary intelligence and of modern writing of which it is impossible to give an account in such notes as these: I can only refer the reader to the book itself, and to the comments of Professor Curtius and of Stuart Gilbert. The experiments in language in part begun in* Ulysses, *Joyce has elaborated in his* Work in Progress, *sections of which have appeared in* transition. *This is perhaps even a greater book than* Ulysses: *certainly it is a book which only the isolated genius of Joyce could have conceived. He has also published two books of poems,* Chamber Music *and* Pomes Penyeach; *a play* Exiles; *and has contributed to the* Imagist anthologies.

From ULYSSES *

They came down the steps from Leahy's terrace prudently, *Frauenzimmer:* and down the shelving shore flabbily, their splayed feet sinking in the silted sand. Like me, like Algy, coming down to our mighty mother. Number one swung lourdily her midwife's bag, the other a gamp poking in the beach. From the liberties, out for the

* This extract is of special interest, since it was taken from the *Little Review* text, which differs in many instances from the later Paris edition.

day. Mrs. Florence MacCabe, relict of the late Patk MacCabe, deeply lamented, of Bride Street. Creation from nothing. What has she in the bag? A misbirth with a trailing navelcord, hushed in ruddy wool. The cords of all link back, strandentwining cable of all flesh. That is why mystic monks. Will you be as gods? Gaze in your *omphalos.* Hello. Kinch here. Put me on to Edenville. Aleph, alpha: nought, nought, one.

Spouse and helpmate of Adam Kadmon: Heva, naked Eve. She had no navel. Gaze. Belly without blemish, bulging big, a buckler of taut vellum, no, whiteheaped corn, orient and immortal, standing from everlasting to everlasting. Womb of sin.

Wombed in sin darkness I was too, made not begotten. By them, the man with my voice and my eyes and a ghostwoman with ashes on her breath. They clasped and sundered, did the coupler's will. From before the ages He willed me and now may not will me away for ever. A *lex eterna* stays about Him. Is that then the divine substance wherein Father and Son are consubstantial? When is Arius to answer? Warring his life long on the contransmagnificand-jewbangtantiality? Illstarred heresiarch! In a Greek watercloset he breathed his last: *euthanasia.* With beaded mitre and with crozier, stalled upon his throne, widower of a widowed see, with upstiffed *omophorion,* with clotted hinderparts.

Airs romped around him, nipping and eager airs. They are coming, waves. The whitemaned seahorses, champing, brightwindbridled.

I mustn't forget his letter for the press. And after? The Ship, half twelve. By the way go easy with that money like a good young imbecile. Yes, I must.

His pace slackened. Here. Am I going to Aunt Sara's or not? My consubstantial father's voice. Did you see anything of your artist brother Stephen lately? No? Sure he's not down in Strassburg terrace with his aunt Sally? Couldn't he strike a bit higher than that, eh? And and and tell us Stephen, how is uncle Si? O weeping God, the things I married into! De boys up in de hayloft. The drunken little costdrawer and his brother, the cornet player. Highly respectable gondoliers! And skeweyed Walter sirring his father, no less! Sir. Yes, sir. No, sir. Jesus wept: and no wonder by Christ!

I pull the wheezy bell of their shuttered cottage: and wait. They take me for a dun, peer out from a coign of vantage.

—It's Stephen, sir.

—Let him in. Let Stephen in.

A bolt drawn back and Walter welcomes me.

—We thought you were someone else.

In his broad bed uncle Richie, pillowed and blanketed, extends over the hillock of his knees a sturdy forearm. Cleanchested. He has washed the upper moiety.

—Morrow, nephew.

He lays aside the lapboard whereon he drafts his bill of costs for the eyes of Master Goff and Master Tandy, filing consents and common searches and a writ of *Duces Tecum.* A bogoak frame over his bald head: Wilde's *Requiescat.* The drone of his misleading whistle brings Walter back.

—Yes, sir?

—Malt for Richie and Stephen, tell mother. Where is she?

—Bathing Crissie, sir.

Papa's little lump of love.

—No, uncle Richie . . .

—Call me Richie. Whusky!

—Uncle Richie, really . . .

—Sit down or by the law Harry I'll knock you down.

Walter squints vainly for a chair.

—He has nothing to sit down on, sir.

—He has nowhere to put it, you mug. Bring in our Chippendale chair. Would you like a bite of something? None of your damned lawdeedaw airs here; a rasher fried with a herring? Sure? So much the better. We have nothing in the house but backache pills.

All'erta!

He drones bars of Ferrando's *aria di sortita.* The grandest number Stephen in the whole opera. Listen.

His tuneful whistle sounds again, finely shaded, with rushes of air, his fists bigdrumming on his padded knees.

This wind is sweeter.

Houses of decay, mine, his and all. You told the Clongowes gentry you had an uncle a judge and an uncle a general in the army. Come out of them, Stephen. Beauty is not there. Nor in the stagnant bay of Marsh's library where you read the fading prophecies of Joachim Abbas. For whom? The hundredheaded rabble of the cathedral close. A hater of his kind ran from them to the wood of madness, his mane foaming in the moon, his eyeballs stars. Houyhnhnm, horsenostrilled. The oval equine faces, Temple, Buck Mulligan, Foxy Campbell, Lanternjaws. Abbas father, furious dean what offence laid fire to their brains. Paff! *Descende, calve, ut ne nimium decalveris.* A garland of grey hair on his comminated head see him

now clambering down to the footpace, (*descende*), clutching a monstrance, basiliskeyed. Get down, baldpoll! A choir gives back menace and echo, assisting about the altar's horns, the snorted Latin of jackpriests moving burly in their albs, tonsured and oiled and gelded, fat with the fat of kidneys of wheat. And at the same instant perhaps a priest round the corner is elevating it. Dringdring! And two streets off another locking it into a pyx. Dringadring! And in a ladychapel another taking housel all to his own cheek. Dringdring! Down up, forward back. Dan Occam thought of that, invincible doctor. A misty English morning the imp tickled his brain. Bringing his host down and kneeling he heard twine with his second bell the first bell in the transept (he is lifting his) and, rising, heard (now I am lifting) their two bells (he is kneeling) twang in diphthong.

Cousin Stephen, you will never be a saint. Isle of saints. You were awfully holy, weren't you? You prayed to the Blessed Virgin that you might not have a red nose. You prayed to the devil in Serpentine avenue that the buxom widow in front might lift her clothes still more from the wet street. *O si, certo!* Sell your soul for that, do, dyed rags pinned round a squaw. More tell me, more still! On the top of the Howth tram alone crying to the rain *naked women! naked women!* What about that, eh?

What about what? what else were they invented for?

Reading two pages apiece of seven books every night eh? I was young. You bowed to yourself in the mirror, stepping forward to applause earnestly, striking face. Hurray for the Goddamned idiot! Hray! No-one saw: tell no-one. Books you were going to write with letters for titles. Have you read his F? O yes, but I prefer Q. Yes, but W is wonderful. O yes, W. Remember your epiphanies on green oval leaves, deeply deep, copies to be sent if you died to all the great libraries of the world, including Alexandria? Someone was to read them there after a few thousand years, a mahamanvantara. Pico della Mirandola like. Ay, very like a whale. When one reads these strange pages of one long gone one feels that one is at one with one who once . . .

The grainy sand had gone from under his feet. His boots trod again a damp crackling mast, razorshells, squeaking pebbles, that on the unnumbered pebbles beats, wood sieved by the shipworm, lost armada. Unwholesome sandflats waited to suck his treading soles, breathing upward sewage breath. He coasted them, walking warily. A porterbottle stood up, pitted to its waist, in the cakey

sand dough. A sentinel: isle of dreadful thirst. Broken hoops on the shore; at the land a maze of dark cunning nets; farther away chalk-scrawled backdoors and on the higher beach a dryingline with two crucified shirts. Ringsend: wigwams of brown steersmen and master mariners. Human shells.

He halted. I have passed the way to aunt Sara's. Am I not going there? Seems not. No-one about. He turned northeast and crossed the firmer sand towards the Pigeonhouse.

—*Qui vous a mis dans cette fichue position?*

—*C'est le pigeon, Joseph.*

Patrice, home on furlough, lapped warm milk with me in the bar MacMahon. Son of the wild goose, Kevin Egan of Paris. My father's a bird, he lapped the sweet *lait chaud* with pink young tongue, plump bunny's face. Lap, *lapin*. He hopes to win in the *gros lots*. About the nature of women he read in Michelet. But he must send me *La Vie de Jésus* by Mr. Léo Taxil. Lent it to his friend.

He had come nearer to the edge of the sea and wet sand slapped his boots. The new air greeted him, harping in wild nerves, wind of wild air of seeds of brightness. Here, I am not walking out to the Kish lightship, am I? He stood suddenly, his feet beginning to sink slowly in the quaking soil. Turn back.

Turning, he scanned the shore south, his feet sinking again slowly in new sockets. The cold domed room of the tower waits. Through the barbacans the shafts of light are moving ever, slowly ever as my feet are sinking, creeping duskward over the dial floor. Blue dusk, nightfall, deep blue night. In the darkness of the dome they wait, their pushedback chairs, my obelisk valise, around a board of abandoned platters. Who to clear it? He has the key. I will not sleep there when this night comes. A shut door of a silent tower entombing their blind bodies, the panthersahib and his pointer, back by the mole of boulders. Take all. My soul walks with me, form of forms. So in the moon's midwatches I pace the path above the rocks, in sable silvered, hearing Elsinore's tempting flood.

The flood is following me. I can watch it flow past from here. Get back then by the Poolbeg road to the strand there. He climbed over the sedge and eely oarweeds and sat on a stool of rock, resting his ashplant by him.

A bloated carcase of a dog lolled on bladderwrack. Before him the gunwale of a boat, sunk in sand. *Un coche ensablé* Louis Veuillot called Gautier's prose. These heavy sands are language tide and wind

have silted here. And these, the stoneheaps of dead builders, a warren of weasel rats. Hide gold there. Try it. You have some. Sands and stones. Heavy of the past. Sir Lout's toys. Mind you don't get one bang on the ear. I'm the bloody well giant rolls all them bloody well boulders, bones for my steppingstones. Feefawfum. I zmellz de bloodz oldz an Iridzman.

A point, live dog, grew into sight running across the sweep of sand. Lord, is he going to attack me? Respect his Liberty. You will not be master of others or their slave. I have my stick. Sit tight. From farther away, walking shoreward across from the crested tide, figures, two. The two maries. They have tucked it safe among the bulrushes. Peekaboo. I see you. No, the dog. He is running back to them. Who?

Galleys of the Lochlanns ran here to beach, in quest of prey, their bloodbeaked prows riding low on a molten pewter surf. Dane vikings, torcs of tomahawks aglitter on their breasts when Malachi wore the collar of gold. A school of turlehide whales stranded in hot noon, spouting, hobbling in the shallows. Then from the starving cagework city a horde of jerkined dwarfs, my people, with flayers' knives, running, scaling, hacking in green blubbery whalemeat. Famine, plague and slaughters. Their blood is in me, their lusts my waves. I moved among them on the frozen Liffey, that I, a changeling, among the spluttering resin fires. I spoke to no-one: none to me.

The dog's bark ran towards him, stopped, ran back. Dog of my enemy. I just simply stood pale, silent, bayed about. *Terribilia meditans.* A primrose doublet, fortune's knave, smiled on my fear. For that are you pining, the bark of their applause? Pretenders: live their lives. The Bruce's brother, Thomas Fitzgerald, silken knight, Perkin Warbeck, York's false scion, in breeches of silk of whiterose ivory, wonder of a day, and Lambert Simnel, a scullion crowned. All kings' sons. Paradise of pretenders then and now. He saved men from drowning and you shake at a cur's yelping. But the courtiers who mocked Guido in Or san Michele were in their own house. House of . . . We don't want any of your medieval abstrusiosities. Would you do what he did? A boat would be near, a lifebuoy. *Natürlich,* put there for you. Would you or would you not? The man that was drowned nine days ago off Maiden's rock. They were waiting for him now. The truth, spit it out. I would want to. I would try. I am not a strong swimmer. Water cold soft. When I put my face into it in the basin at Clongowes. Out quickly, quickly!

Do you see the tide flowing quickly in on all sides, sheeting the beds of sand quickly, shellcocoacoloured? If I had land under my feet. I want his life still to be his, mine to be mine. A drowning man. His human eyes scream to me out of horror of his death. I . . . With him together down . . . I could not save her. Waters: bitter death: lost.

A woman and a man. I see her skirties. Pinned up, I bet.

Their dog ambled about a bank of dwindling sand, trotting, sniffing on all sides. Looking for something lost in a past life. Suddenly he made off like a bounding hare, ears flung back, chasing the shadow of a lowskimming gull. The man's shrieked whistle struck his limp ears. He turned, hounded back, came nearer, trotted on twinkling shanks. On a field tenney a buck trippant, proper, unattired. At the lacefringe of the tide he halted with stiff forehoofs, seawardpointed ears. His snout lifted barked at the wavenoise. They serpented towards his feet, curling, unfurling many crests, every ninth, breaking, splashing, from far, from farther out, waves and waves.

Cocklepickers. They waded a little way in the water and, stooping, soused their bags, and, lifting them again, waded out. The dog yelped running to them, reared up and pawed them, dropping on all fours, again reared up at them with mute bearish fawning. Unheeded he kept by them as they came towards the drier sand, a rag of wolf's tongue redpanting from his jaws. His speckled body ambled ahead of them and then set off at a calf's gallop. The carcase lay on his path. He stopped, sniffed, stalked round it, brother, nosing closer, went round it, sniffing rapidly, dogsniff, eyes on the ground, moves to one great goal. Ah poor dogsbody! Here lies the dogsbody's body.

—Tatters! Out of that you mongrel!

The cry brought him skulking back to his master and a blunt bootless kick sent him unscathed across a spit of sand, crouched in flight. He slunk back in a curve. Doesn't see me. Along by the edge of the mole he dawdled, smelt a rock and, from under a cocked hind leg pissed against it. Something he buried there, his grandmother. He rooted in the sand, dabbling and delving and stopped to listen to the air; scraped up the sand again with a fury of his claws, soon ceasing, a pard, a panther, got in spouse-breach, vulturing the dead.

After he woke me up last night same dream or was it? Wait. Open hallway. Street of harlots. Remember. I am almosting it.

That man led me, spoke. I was not afraid. The melon he had he held against my face. Smiled: creamfruit smell. That was the rule said. In. Come. Red carpet spread. You will see who.

Shouldering their bags they passed. His blued feet out of turned-up trousers slapped the clammy sand, a dull red muffler strangling his unshaven neck. With woman steps she followed: the ruffian and his strolling mort, spoils slung at her back. Loose sand and shellgrit crusted her bare feet. About her windraw face her hair trailed. Behind her lord his helpmate, trudging to Romeville. When night hides her body's flaws calling under her brown shawl from an archway where dogs have mired. Her fancyman is treating two Royal Dublins in O'Loughlin's of Blackpitts. Buss her, wap in rogues' rum lingo, for, O, my dimber wapping dell. A shefiend's whiteness under her rancid rags. Fumbally's lane that night: the tanyard smells.

White thy fambles, red thy gan
And thy quarrons dainty is.
Couch a hogshead with me then:
In the darkmans clip and kiss.

Morose delectation Aquinas tunbelly calls this, *frate porcospino.* Call away let him: thy quarrons dainty is. Language no whit worse than his. Monkwords, marybeads jabber on their girdles: rogue-words, tough nuggets patter in their pockets.

Passing now.

A side-eye at my Hamlet hat. If I were suddenly naked here as I sit? I am not. Across the sands of all the world, followed by the sun's flaming sword, to the west, to evening lands. She trudges, schlepps, trains, drags, trascines her load. A tide westering, moon-drawn, in her wake, tides, myriadislanded, within her, blood not mine, *oinopa ponton,* a winedark sea. Behold the handmaid of the moon. In sleep the wet sign calls her hour, bids her rise. Bridebed, childbed, bed of death, ghostcandled. *Omnis caro ad te veniet.* He comes, pale vampire, through storm his eyes, his bat sails bloodying the sea, mouth to her mouth's kiss.

Here. Put a pin in that chap, will you? My tablet. Mouth to her kiss. No. Must be two of 'em. Glue 'em well. Mouth to her mouth's kiss.

His lips lipped and mouthed fleshless lips of air: mouth to her woomb. Oomb, alwombing tomb. His mouth moulded issuing breath, unspeeched: ooeeehah: roar of cataractic planets, globed,

blazing, roaring wayawayawayawayawayaway. Paper. The banknotes, blast them. Old Deasy's letter. Here. Thanking you for the hospitality tear the blank end off. Turning his back to the sun he bent over far to a table of rock and scribbled words. That's twice I forgot to take slips from the library counter.

His shadow lay over the rocks as he bent, ending. Why not endless till the farthest star? Darkly they are there behind this light, darkness shining in the brightness, delta of Cassiopeia, worlds. Me sits there with his augur's rod of ash, in borrowed sandals, by day beside a livid sea, unbeheld, in violet night walking beneath a reign of uncouth stars. I throw this ended shadow from me, call it back. Endless, would it be mine, form of my form? Who watches me here? Who ever anywhere will read these written words? Signs on a white field. Somewhere to someone in your flutiest voice. The good bishop of Cloyne took the veil of the temple out of his shovel hat: veil of space with coloured emblems hatched on its field. Hold hard. Coloured on a flat: yes, that's right. Flat I see, then think distance, near, far, flat I see, east, back. Ah, see now! Falls back suddenly frozen in stereoscope. Click does the trick. You find my words dark. Darkness is in our souls do you not think? Flutier. Our souls, shamewounded by our sins, cling to us yet more, a woman to her lover clinging, the more the more.

She trusts me, her hand gentle, the longlashed eyes. Now where the blue hell am I bringing her beyond the veil? Into the ineluctable modality of the ineluctable visuality. She, she, she. What she? The virgin at Hodges Riggis' window on Monday looking in for one of the alphabet books you were going to write. Keen glance you gave her. Wrist through the braided jesse of her sunshade. She lives in Leesonpark, a lady of letters. Talk that to someone else, Stevie: a pickmeup. Bet she wears those curse of God stays suspenders and yellow stockings, darned with lumpy wool. Talk about apple dumpling, *piuttosto*. Where are your wits?

Touch me. Soft eyes. Soft soft soft hand. I am lonely here. O, touch me soon, now. What is that word known to all men? I am quiet here alone. Sad too. Touch, touch me.

He lay back at full stretch over the sharp rocks, cramming the scribbled note and pencil into a pocket, his hat tilted down on his eyes. That is Kevin Egan's movement I made, nodding for his nap. *Hlo! Bonjour*. Under its leaf he watched through peacock-twittering lashes the southing sun. Pan's hour, the faunal noon. Among gum-

heavy serpent-plants, milkoozing fruits, where on the tawny waters leaves lie wide. Pain is far.

And no more turn aside and brood.

His gaze brooded on his broadtoed boots, a buck's castoffs, *nebeneinander.* He counted the creases of rucked leather wherein another's foot had nestled warm. The foot that beat the ground in tripudium, foot I dislove. But you were delighted when Esther Osvalt's shoe went on you: girl I knew in Paris. *Tiens, quel petit pied!* Staunch friend, a brother soul: Wilde's love that dare not speak its name. He now will leave me. And the blame? As I am. All or not at all.

In long lassos from the Cock lake the water flowed full, covering greengoldenly lagoons of sand, rising, flowing. My ashplant will float away. I shall wait. No, they will pass on, passing chafing against the lower rocks, swirling, passing. Better get this job over quick. Listen: a fourworded wavespeech: seesoo, hrss, rsseeiss ooos. Vehement breath of waters amid seasnakes, rearing horses, rocks. In cups of rocks it slops: flop, slop, slap: bounded in barrels. And, spent, its speech ceases. It flows purling, widely flowing, floating foampool, flower unfurling.

Under the upswelling tide he saw the writhing weeds lift languidly and sway reluctant arms, hising up their petticoats, in whispering water swaying and upturning coy silver fronds. Day by day: night by night: lifted, flooded and let fall: Lord they are weary: and, whispered to, they sigh. Saint Ambrose heard it, sigh of leaves and waves, waiting, awaiting the fulness of their times, *diebus ac noctibus inursia patiens ingemiscit.* To no end gathered: vainly then released, forthflowing, wending back: loom of the moon. Weary too in sight of lovers, lascivious men, a naked woman shining in her court, she draws a toil of waters.

Five fathoms out there. Full fathom five thy father lies. At one he said. High water at Dublin bar. Driving before it a loose drift of rubble, fanshoals of fishes, silly shells. A corpse rising saltwhite from the undertow, bobbing landward. There he is. Hook it quick. Pull. We have him. Easy now.

Bag of corpsegas sopping in foul brine. A quiver of minnows, fat of a spongy titbit, flash through the slits of his buttoned trouserfly. God becomes man becomes fish becomes barnacle goose becomes featherbed mountain. Dead breaths I living breathe, tread dead dust, devour a urinous offal from all dead. Hauled stark over the gun-

wale he breathes upward the stench of his green grave, his leprous nosehole snoring to the sun.

A seachange this. Seadeath, mildest of all deaths known to man. *Prix de Paris:* beware of imitations. Just you give it a fair trial. We enjoyed ourselves immensely.

Come. Clouding over. No black clouds anywhere, are there? Thunderstorm. No. My cockle hat and staff and his my sandal shoon. Where? To evening lands. Evening will find itself.

He took the hilt of his ashplant, lunging with it softly, dallying still. Yes, evening will find itself in me, without me. All days make their end. By the way next when is it Tuesday will be the longest day. Of all the glad new year, mother, the rum tum tiddledy tum. Lawn Tennyson, gentleman poet. *Giá.* For the old hag with the yellow teeth. And Monsieur Drumont, gentleman journalist *Giá.* My teeth are very bad. Why, I wonder? Feel. That one is going too. Shells. Ought I go to a dentist, I wonder, with that money? That one. This. Toothless Kinch, the superman. Why is that, I wonder, or does it mean something perhaps?

My handkerchief. He threw it. I remember. Did I not take it up?

His hand groped vainly in his pockets. No. I didn't. Better buy one. He laid the dry snot picked from his nostril on a ledge of rock, carefully. For the rest let look who will.

Behind. Perhaps there is someone.

He turned his face over a shoulder, rere regardant. Moving through the air high spars of a threemaster, her sails brailed up on the crosstrees, homing, silently moving, a silent ship.——

(Courtesy of the Author and Messrs. Shakespeare & Co.)

Richard Aldington

Richard Aldington was one of the leaders of the Imagist movement, immediately before the war. He published at that time some books of poetry, and some translations from Greek and French authors. He held a commission during the war: afterwards he published little until his Death of a Hero *appeared—a war-book of which the latter parts are among the best in the war-literature. His recent verse-novel,* A Dream in the Luxembourg, *is the most interesting poem of the last few years, and deserves attention; it suggests a direction to modern poetry, of great possibilities. He was respon-*

sible for the last Imagist Anthology, *1930. Among his translations is that of Julien Benda's much discussed book,* Le Trahison des Clercs; *and translations of* Voltaire, *about whom Aldington has written.*

From A DREAM IN THE LUXEMBOURG

Here, for a moment, I must pause,
For, as you see, I've come to the core of my dream;
There is so much to tell
And I don't know what I ought or ought not to tell. . . .

And another thing troubles me about all this—
Did it really happen?
Was it only a dream in the Luxembourg?
Was it a vision of what will be,
My spirit brooding over her so intensely
That for an hour I saw the future?
For, though I know it all went on in my brain,
Yet it was so vivid I seemed to behold it
Clearly in a clear crystal glass.
I saw her and I saw myself,
And yet it all happened within myself.

I did not go into the garden, saying:
"I will sit down and write myself a tale
Of what I should like to happen
And how she came to love me."
But just after I paid my sous
For the hard iron chair in the gardens,
Suddenly I was at my desk in England,
As I told you just now, and my dream unrolled
Exactly as I tell you with all the details
I remember so clearly and could not invent.

But what is present, past and future?
If it did not happen, it will happen.
Oh, promise me it shall happen
Either now or in many millions of years,
I do not quite believe my assertion.

But you may think it far more amazing
That even in a dream a supple wood-nymph
Should love such a man,
Well, the Queen kissed Alain Chartier's lips
(And he was no beauty among trouvères)
And the Lady Marguerite,
Who was the fairest of all the ladies of Provence,
Loved Guilhem de Cabestanh, and died for his memory,
And you remember how Piere Vidal ran mad for his Wolflady
Until she gave him back right reason with one kiss,
And how the Lady of Tripoli came to Janfre Rudel
As he lay dying, and she too kissed him,
Saying that such a love should not go unrewarded.
Then there is the man in the *langue d'oil* tale
Who fought with no armour but his lady's shift,
And sent it to her all torn and bloody from the battle;
And she kissed it, and put it on over her jewels and dress
As she sat at the high table by the side of her lord,
For she said: "He did that for me,
And shall I be ashamed of this man's love?"
Clad in the bloody shift she poured wine to the guests,
And all men present praised her for her *grant amor,*
And (says the poet) her lord spake not a word,
For he dared not.

My love is just such a woman
As the supple, high-breasted, high-spirited
Ladies of Provence,
With no fear of the burgesses and the sleek priests
Always strangling life with their unctuous fingers.
She has the gaiety of old Provence,
And I think she would not despise
The unknown lady of Guilhem de Poitiers,
Who was a poet as well as a sovereign prince.
Guilhem had his lady's effigy painted on his big steel shield,
For said he: "It is fitting I bear her in battle,
Since she so often has borne me in her bed."

Yet if she is like a lady of Provence,
Why do I say she is a supple wood-nymph?
But how do you know that these noble women

Whose eyes drew the clerk from his cloister,
The knight's hand from the spear to the lute,
How do you know they were not wood and hill nymphs,
Daughters of the gods, semi-immortals,
Bringing them love and gaiety and beauty,
Fighting in their way, as becomes fair women,
The Jewish gloom and the gloomy Christ.

And again I say she is a wood-nymph
Because she is brave and frank and honest and herself.
Now in this world, which is full of dreary people,
The only fine, vivid characters are those like her
Who are not the epitome of an education, a caste or a class,
But are keen enough and strong enough
To work through prejudices and customs
And to give themselves directly to life and those they love.
Now if you will think of an English gentleman,
Who is a sort of tidy collection of prejudices;
And if you will think of an American debutante
Waiting in her car to be presented at Court—
You will see the kind of person she is not.
And, unless I am bitterly wrong about her,
Her values are the true values. . . .

And there is yet another reason I call her a wood-nymph . . .
When I was younger they called me a faun
Because I have pointed ears and tell the truth
And if you know nothing about wood-nymphs and fauns,
You will know the Carnival lovesong
Lorenzo de' Medici wrote about them. . . .

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Covici-Friede, Inc.)

Geoffrey Taylor

Geoffrey Taylor is a young Irish poet now farming in England. He has contributed to The Irish Statesman *and to* transition, *and under the name Geoffrey Phibbs has published two books,* Withering of the Figleaf *and* It was Not Jones. *His vigorous poetry has been consciously influenced by the technique of Gerard Manley Hopkins, but is fundamentally native and original, and of great interest.*

SPRING TREE

Seeking some distinction of,
Some tooled-cold phrase
In vain, finding not any
Let us leave the powder-green
Of a young elm tree
Over against the greyness of St. Pauls,
Content that Sir Christopher Wren—he
First dreamt it in my Wicklow Hills—
Though seeing with eye not then
With mind's eye must have seen
Such elm tree's powder-green,
(And more coldly,
His pattern onfolding)
New green gainst grey grown older.
  Unless one cares less,
  More than most cares less,
  Thought not let more express.

TO R. GRAVES

Aptly, aptly he,
However drunk was, is, must be,
Yet aptly—
(Electric sign misread
Me such wordward led)
Reeling reached cup and drained it,
I admire how,
Having set hand to plough,
By whatsoever crooked gait he gained it,
The straightness of his furrow. Now,
Aptly, aptly he,
Arrowstraight over edge down steep place into sea.

SMILE TO NO SMILE

Smile to no smile;
And converging
Black lines, as two black lines,
And so converging,
Do we not understand as plain perspective,
Perspective as historical geometry.
Converging smile to no smile so converging
Met and kissed and were at separation,
And were not, once again, for clearness sake.
So coming back, so turning on themselves,
Converging to the point of separation.
Smile to no smile,
Over the thin red mile upon red mile
Of simple so converging;
Simply with no urging,
To a horizontal.
We and I,
A point of separation,
I from we.
The blue horizon of the level sea
Gained at the point of smiling separation,
I from me.

NUMBER

Time, history, degree, these are
Error's arrows shot by my particular
Ape-ancestor
Down the evolutionary line to me.
Each arrow tipped with sensibility
Strikes deep love's apple, splits splits at the core,
And love's divided, fractioned more and more.
Love ought to be beyond erroneous time,
But in number lies the germ, the little-legged blind crime,
The worm that is disintegration.
If love were one,

Love only, love lonely,
Beyond, outside, degree of numeration,
Then any one room would be large enough
Or any palace would be small enough,
Atlantic Liner or Thames Barge enough,
All, or all-but-nothing-at-all enough.
But my ape ancestor has aimed at me
From his antique laboratory.

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Theodore F. Powys

T. F. Powys is a novelist who is very much alone in contemporary English writing. Mr. Tasker's Gods *still had affinities with the novels of Garnett, yet pointed a different direction; and in his subsequent work Powys has followed that direction far. His last novel,* Mr. Weston's Good Wine, *puts forward a symbolism of great simplicity; all Powys's work has been concerned with the problem of symbolism in some form, and is more confident, as well as more individual, than any other writing of the same contemporary bias. Besides his novels, which include* Black Bryony *and* Mockery Gap, *he has published a number of short stories, some of which have appeared in* This Quarter, *and some of which he has just collected in* The House with the Echo.

A PAPERED PARLOUR

Everyone in East Dodder knew that when Miss Mary Perret married, she would marry a good man. No one, in a village way of speaking, had been taught better than Mary. There was no housework that she could not do; no one could iron the pleats in a summer frock better than Miss Perret, and nothing in a house—even to the painting and decorating of the inner walls—came amiss to her. She could cook so carefully, having as much regard to the pence that provided the materials as to the bellies that digested them, that it was said of her in East Dodder that, whereas some people could only live on so many pounds a week, Miss Perret could live on so many pence.

Miss Perret had been the only child of her parents, who were a little different from other people because Mrs. Perret had one re-

ligion and Mr. Perret another. But they both believed in Mary. They died blessing her.

When they were gone, and no graves were kept neater and tidier than theirs in all Dodder churchyard, Miss Perret had to leave her cottage because it had been but a lifehold vested in the lives of her parents. Miss Perret was thirty when her cottage was taken away from her by the squire's agent, Major Rutter, who had never seen Miss Perret, for if he had he could hardly have turned her out so rudely.

Miss Perret's hair was so clean—indeed, all of her was as clean as her hair—and she was never idle. She could sew and make her own dresses, and the dresses that she wore always fitted her perfectly. While she lived with her parents there was always a little money to spare, so that Miss Perret could buy some remnants, out of which she made her pretty frocks.

One would have thought that, when Miss Perret was at liberty —having no parents to tend—a number of people would have offered her a home as she was so good a workwoman. But this was not the case, for it seemed that a young and pretty woman and a good worker into the bargan was not as much sought after as might have been expected.

However, Mrs. Haxey, a widow lady, allowed Miss Perret to live with her, though she promised her nothing in return for her labours except her mere food.

Miss Perret had always been kind and good to her neighbours and, when all the furniture in her old home was sold, and the doctor and the funeral expenses paid for her parents, Miss Perret was left with only a wooden box where she kept her clothes, and a dozen rolls of wall-paper, all done up in a brown paper parcel.

This wall-paper Mary had intended for the parlour at home, but what with one thing and another connected with the illness of her parents, she had never been able to use it, and so she carried the parcel to Mrs. Haxey's, hoping that one day she might have a parlour of her own to decorate.

Once or twice when Mary Perret had done all the work that she could do for Mrs. Haxey, she thought that she might use the little leisure that she had by papering Mrs. Haxey's front room with her own paper, instead of keeping it for herself, but she might just as well have papered the trees in the squire's park, for Mrs. Haxey would have been sure to have torn it all down in one of her coughing fits, for when Mrs. Haxey coughed she caught hold of anything

that was handy, and after a fit or two she would have had the paper all off the walls. And so the possession of that wall-paper made Mary Perret wish to marry.

It is said that every lady has her own reasons, which few would share with her, for wishing to be wedded. Miss Perret saw her own wedded happiness in the setting up of her wall-paper, and so she had only been at Mrs. Haxey's a few months before she looked round her for a husband.

A good woman naturally wishes to marry a good man, and a woman who is industrious would not wish to marry idleness. And so Miss Perret cast her eyes about her in order to find, if possible, a hard-working man who would give her a good home.

Miss Perret did not look long for, so shapely were her legs and so neat her ankles, she was soon noticed. Mr. Mill who noticed her was the least idle of all the men of East Dodder. He had two employments and was always ready for anything else in the way of work that wanted to be done. His neat cottage, which he lived in all alone, was a little way back from the road, and not a stick nor a stone about it was ever out of order.

Who could have supposed that Mr. Mill had a cruel heart? No one in Dodder thought so, and certainly not Miss Perret. But no woman, however careful, can always follow a man into all his doings.

Mr. Mill was a rabbit-catcher, as well as being sometimes a day-labourer, for if any work, such as threshing the cornstacks, required extra men, Mr. Mill would follow the customs and traditions that belonged to that calling, so that no one could say of him that he acted in any way out of the ordinary in his profession.

He was always a man to do what he promised. If Mr. Mill promised to supply a rabbit to Mrs. Duggs, who didn't mind its age so long as the rabbit was a large one, the rabbit was always brought—as Mr. Mill had foretold—in time for a Sunday dinner.

Mr. Mill wore side-whiskers; he was a pale and a quiet-looking man, he walked slowly when abroad, and was never disturbed or put out by any ill-bred word from a man, nor yet by any fierce gust of wind, or hailstorm from the sky. When the rain fell in torrents Mr. Mill would walk as though the sun shone, neither seeming to stoop against the blast nor to be in the least displeased by the splashing waters.

Mr. Mill was a king by nature; he ruled the rabbit-warren, over which he had sole power, in an autocratic manner. He gave his subjects life and he also took their lives from them, and their

bodies too. And, though he killed as many rabbits as he chose, yet he would allow no one else to do his subjects any hurt. All stoats and weasels were banished from his kingdom, and did any poacher try to steal a march upon Mr. Mill and set a snare in his preserves, he lost the snare as well as the time that he had taken to set it.

Mr. Mill had not always lived in his cottage alone; he had been married twice. Each of his brides he had chosen because of her docility, and because of a natural taste in each to harbour her husband's goods, so that when she left the house—a poor, meek corpse —there was not one thing broken or mislaid that had been in Mr. Mill's cottage when she stepped in, wearing her orange-blossom.

Neither lady had given to Mr. Mill any child, and so when Miss Perret's turn came—she looked so charming that day that even the Reverend John Hayhoe shuffled his feet a little when he married her to Mr. Mill—she felt that, though she had just walked by the graves of the other two, she was really the first one to be married to him.

Everyone likes to hear a good man speak kindly, and during the courtship Miss Perret was never tired of hearing Mr. Mill talk. And he was never tired of saying how kind he liked to be to women, and to rabbits. He knew the ways, he said, of the one and of "they t'others. One woman at a time," he was once heard to say, "and many rabbits" . . .

Mr. Mill wanted a woman for another reason than to work, and that was why he married Miss Perret.

"Please, may I paper the parlour?" asked Mrs. Mill, when the wedding guests were departed and the two sat at supper alone. "May I paper the parlour? I have kept the paper for a long time, and often at Mrs. Haxey's, when the rains dripped down the windows, and Mrs. Haxey held her sides with coughing, I used to undo the rolls and admire the pattern and wonder when I should have my own parlour to paper."

"No, not to-morrow," said Mr. Mill.

As the evening wore on, Mr. Mill eyed his wife more and more curiously. Once he took up her hand, but soon put it down again, merely observing to himself, "Yes, a woman!" Once when she moved to the door to go out with the supper cloth, Mr. Mill moved silently out too, as though he thought she was a snared rabbit trying to escape.

At breakfast the next morning Mary said, "May I paper the parlour to-morrow?"

"No," replied her husband, "what be done here, I do do. A

woman be too wide awake sometimes, and a rabbit be too sleepy." And Mr. Mill went out to help to thresh Farmer Lord's new wheat.

Mary sat in a chair when he was gone and wondered what she had better do. Mr. Mill's married behaviour had exhausted her; he had behaved like an old red fox who had been long denied a mate. Mary felt both shocked and outraged. She had married only to be able to paper her own parlour.

To bustle about, to do one thing or another in a womanly manner would, she hoped, give her more ease. She felt ill and looked this way and that to see what she could do so that she might forget the usage she had been subjected to. But there was nothing for her to do. All the work of the house had already been done by Mr. Mill. He had been working while she had fallen into an uneasy doze. There was nothing left for her to do.

Before Mr. Mill had gone out he had helped her to clear away the breakfast and to wash the plates and cups. He had done his share so deftly, and indeed, more than his share. All that she did to help was so little that she had seemed to do nothing. He had even laid her dinner, setting upon the table all that she might require, and had departed with his own done up as neatly, and all prepared by himself.

Mary Mill looked at her rolls of wall-paper. She seemed far worse off now than at Mrs. Haxey's. She had work there to occupy her the whole day, and now she had nothing to do. She had changed her state because she wished to paper her own parlour, but she could not do that even now unless Mr. Mill gave her permission. At Mrs. Haxey's she had slept comfortably each night, but her first married night had utterly disgusted her and made her miserable. What could she do to forget it?

She took up her workbox and looked into it. She had used all her cotton in making her wedding garments. She would go and buy some more at the shop, but she had no money—not so much as one penny. She had spent all her savings in buying what she needed for her wedding.

She sat with her hands folded upon her lap. She had married Mr. Mill because he was so hardworking, and now she had nothing to do. She sat thus all day; she felt too dispirited even to take away the plate she had used for her dinner.

When he came home, she said that she wanted to do something, —to work.

"Bed-time be coming," observed Mr. Mill, while he employed himself in doing all that was needed.

The next day Mary felt more than ever weak and sad. But, for all that, she asked Mr. Mill for some money to buy cotton.

"If there is nothing else for me to do, I must sew," she said.

"I didn't marry 'ee to do sewing work," said Mr. Mill, "and 'tis me pleasure to do all meself." Mr. Mill unlocked a strong wooden box, in which were all the tools that are required for household mending. He locked the box again, and put the key into his pocket.

"A married woman be best without work," he said, "for 'tis for she to lie down and to think upon t'other matters."—Mr. Mill moved about the room.

Though ill, Mary lived from day to day. She did nothing, and, when evening came, she doubted whether she could live through another night of his behaviour. But a woman can bear much, and so months went by, and many a time during those months did Mary Mill wish that she had never been born. She wished herself, many a time, anything in the house that he used rather than to be herself —his woman.

Mr. Mill appeared to spend hours out-of-doors, and yet he seemed to be nearly always at home. All the proper tasks of a woman he took away from her. He only allowed her one use—the natural, the crude, the merely bestial. He expected that of her, and that alone.

All her life, up till the unlucky day when she thought she had found a good man, Mary had never been idle and had always been happy. There was nothing she would not do, as a child, to help in the home, and at Mrs. Haxey's she had only the one wish, to go where she could work harder—and that was why she had married Mr. Mill. She had certainly thought that there was room in any house—even in Mr. Mill's—for a woman's labour. She had been married on a Tuesday, and through all that week, though she could find nothing to do, yet she still hoped.

She would wait till the Monday, which was the day in which all right-minded women did their washing. He couldn't possibly deprive her of that labour—a woman's toil and pleasure. She had remained in enforced idleness, but when Monday came she would be free to work.

On the Sunday Mr. Mill looked at her curiously. They went to church together, and he seemed to be very devout. It was a feast

day, and Mr. Mill told her it was his custom to buy from the Inn a gallon of beer, to carry this home and to drink and be merry in company with his friend, Mr. Bone, the sexton. Mary had always been told that Mr. Mill drank nothing.

He made her stand in front of him. He wanted to look at her as he drank, he said. When he had finished the beer, he ordered her to bed. Mr. Bone left the house and Mr. Mill soon followed her to bed. In the middle of the night Mary Mill stirred weakly. She spoke, no one replied, and she closed her eyes.

In the early morning she opened her eyes. She remembered the washing; she had looked forward to that day through long hours of enforced idleness. She raised herself a little. However much his huge lusts had weakened her, she would light the copper and begin.

The morning was delightful. The little May birds were all of them singing and the sun had just risen and poured out his golden love upon all things. A fresh wind, happy that the night was gone, blew briskly.

Mary dressed herself, looked at the bed, and shuddered.

"How wise are some women," she thought, "to get to know the habits of a man before they marry him."

Mary Mill opened the bedroom door. She was greeted by a purr of steam from the copper. She tottered downstairs.

The copper had been lit during the night, it was now burnt out, and all the washing was done. Mary Mill opened the back door; she saw all the clothes hung upon the line. Her own breakfast was laid ready, and he had gone out to work.

There is something about the word "rabbit" that makes children laugh. But Mrs. Mill dreaded the word. Whenever her husband spoke of a rabbit, he behaved more cruelly towards her. On the days when he worked as a labourer he acted mildly compared to the days when he went to the warren.

There he could do things that no one could see, and, because they were done to rabbits, no one heard of them. But at night, he would be newly inspired. He would seem as if he would gnaw her eyes out,—he did worse too. She—a poor woman—found herself in the hands of a horrible beast, and she found it hard to creep about the house.

A little way up the road, and near to the sexton's cottage, there was the churchyard. One day Mrs. Mill asked her husband whether she might walk there. The sexton was Mr. Bone, her husband's friend, who had often come to drink with him upon a Sunday

evening. Both were regarded as very respectable people in the village. But Mary never dared stay in the room with Mr. Bone.

One night, when her husband was very drunk, he had offered his wife to him.

"Ferret her out, and let I see thee do it," he had cried. But Mary had made that impossible and Mr. Bone had departed.

But now she wanted Mr. Bone. Through all her trouble, Mary had still the heart of a girl who had one wish in the world, and that was to paper her own parlour. She had grown used to the goatish behaviour of her husband, and she did not think that Mr. Bone could treat her worse, amongst the graves, than he did. She met him by the churchyard gate, when her husband was out.

"Will you do it for me," she asked aloud, after whispering a question into Mr. Bone's ear.

Mr. Bone looked at her. Though so weak and ill,—indeed, nearly dying of her sorrows—she still appeared to have the body of a woman.

"Come on," said Mr. Bone, "behind the yew-tree there be a nice soft grave."

"No, not now," said Mary, "but you can do what you choose with me when my parlour is papered."

The sexton nodded. It was worth while, he thought, to do a little work with such an end in view.

The next morning Mr. Bone asked Mr. Mill for a rabbit. A young doe-rabbit, he said, would suit his rotten teeth. Mr. Mill said he would go to the warren the very next day.

He went and Mary did not wait long after he had gone out but went out too. She went out joyfully. She had only herself to give to Mr. Bone as payment for what he had done. But, even with that end in sight, Mary went happily to the churchyard. She might have good luck, and that good luck would be to escape Mr. Bone. She could also prevent her husband from taking another wife. He was killing her quickly and was already beginning to talk to Nellie Brine, a village girl, whom he would present now and again with a rabbit.

Mary Mill took two rolls of her wall-paper, and went out. She had never been so happy. No one—not even her husband—could prevent her working that morning. Her husband had gone to the warren; he would not be back for some hours. He was gone to fetch a dinner for Mr. Bone.—She also was to be the sexton's dinner, but not before she had papered her parlour.

The grave had been dug on the sly; no one in the village knew of it. And when she had papered it, it was to be covered up again with boards.

Mary prepared herself for the work. The sides of the grave were lined with matchwood boarding; she had made the sexton do that by promising the reward,—herself.

The churchyard ladder was in the grave, and Mary unrolled her paper. She had brought some paste with her, and she laid her paper down upon the grass and put on the paste. She measured the grave and cut the rolls into proper lengths. Then she papered her parlour.

She had just finished when the sexton came back from his dinner. He found her looking at her parlour; she was happy.

Mr. Bone looked anxious. "There be folks at work in that field," he said, pointing with his hand. "Get thee into the grave; 'tis a good place for thee."

Mary had worked for so long, and she was happy. Happiness is a danger to some people, to others it is a blessing. Though ill, the work Mary had done had given her a new heart. She had always worked for others, and now she had papered her parlour, not for herself, but for Mr. Bone.

She asked him to go first into the grave: she would follow. Mr. Bone went down and called to her to come.

Mary drew up the ladder. Before Mr. Bone knew what she was doing, she placed the heavy boards over the grave. Upon them she shovelled the earth that had come out of the grave, so that the man in the grave would be secure from draught.

He would also be obliged to stay where he was.

The grave had been dug in a corner of the churchyard, to which no one went. Mary was happy; she was now dangerous.

Her husband had carried his ferrets to the warren, and when he went with the ferrets he left his gun at home. The gun was loaded. Mary went out of her back-door, carrying a gun.

Over all Dodder a thick mist had fallen. It was impossible to see more than a few yards in any direction. Near to the cottage there was a little lane that led to the warren. That was the lane down which her husband used to come. Mary had papered her parlour for Mr. Bone, and now she would shoot her husband for the devil's tea. She had never been allowed to lay her own tea, so she would lay the devil's. Mary waited. Soon a gun went off. Mary laid his weapon beside him and went home.

The first thing she did when she got there was to put all the

dirty clothes she could find into the copper and cover them with water. Mary clapped her hands; she lit the copper fire. While the copper was burning, she ate her dinner. . . .

In the spring a mound of earth is soon covered by nettles and grass. For years the heap of mould in the corner of the churchyard was left untouched and then more rubbish was put upon it. People said that Mr. Bone was gone to stay with his sister, and a new sexton was appointed.

This new Sexton's name was Mr. Huddy, and the first grave he dug was for Mr. Mill, who had shot himself, accidentally, in the lane.

One never should carry a loaded gun and a load of rabbits on the same shoulder.

(Courtesy of the Author and of *This Quarter.*)

Joseph Gordon Macleod

Gordon Macleod is a young poet who is about to publish his first book, The Ecliptic, *a long poem in twelve sections each of which relates one section of a man's life to one of the signs of the zodiac. The man is not himself a coherent personality and the section here given deals with the difficulties he experiences in physical union. The poem is marked by descriptive vigour and a strong metaphysic.*

VIRGO, or, THE VIRGIN

Section from THE ECLIPTIC

'A wooden nuthatch taps my girdled womb,'
The Virgin called, 'as brittle now as ivywood.
When I the bridegrowth part toward the pines,
Woodpecker in triforium derides
With instant yell: at which the woodsmoke trembles
Loitering like a trespasser. The embers
All fall pale. And sight deserts mine eyes.'

'I am here, here,' came Leo's answering cry,
'Here where the wren is faltering in his song,
Here where the brushwood parts, and burning logs
Fill the live wood with incense of destruction.

Fear no woodpecker, but be full of courage:
Soon shall our tangents meet.'
The hours wore on
Till closer called the Virgin to her man,
'Are you there? there?' 'Where quivers this spruce fir.'
'Already I can see the the sunset air
Like a long goldfish under weeds of branches.'
'Then we are not far off.' The evening dances
On and on. Unseen from up behind
A primrose moon splashes the open pines
They make for. The toy stars begin their play.
Then calls the Virgin tremulously again,
'A wooden nuthatch taps me. Oh, I fear.'
Which Leo answers, 'I am almost there.'
His very gentleness makes her more frightened
As if a storm crooned cradlesong, or lightning
Fingered. But she calms her face and hands
Proceeding, till the birchfrustation ends.

Her lover catches her, and over dust
White sand dust soft as carpets costliest,
They walk the heath, and listen to the night.
Electric nightjars, hither-thither wired,
Whirr bells from east to west and west to east:
The nearer moths zip at the lower leaves,
Breezes stuffed in little wings: and the winds puff
Exotically with smell of pines and earth.
Beyond the hill, two dogs bark: a forlorn goat
Croaks with despair: and down the London road
White beams of motor cars that flash in suite
Continual radii, dip and reappear.

Now is the hour of which the witch has spoken
When from the dross shall lie apart the golden:
Now is the hour, Leo, to dismiss
The spell that binds her, burst the chrysalid's
Glued girdle. Let the summer be achieved,
Let dragonflies go glittering from the reeds.

He turns to take her. But before he reaches,
She springs away, a bleating ram, a creature

Frightened, and upturns her pleading face,
'Rather turn yourself to a man,' it cries. Amazed,
He follows near. Whereat the curving horns
Shoot out, as wicked as a bull that gores,
And her eyes glare with savage purpose. Hate
Tosses her as she paws the ground: and faint
With wilderment as he stands apart,
'Rather turn yourself to a man,' it lows afar.
Made yet and yet more virile he strides on
Lassoing her with love: but all too soon
At his approach (as a moth's wing beat quickly)
He drawing near observes the bullock dwindling
Into a rotting corpse of lost acquaintance,
In whose liquescent lips the cackle straightens
Hard and dry: 'Rather turn yourself to a man.'

'A man, man am I,' he retching stands
And sobs: whereat the corpse gurgles again
And shivers. He puts out a hand and waits.
Then while the yaffle yells demoniac laughter,
A loathsome crab it sidles cold and crafty
And 'Rather turn yourself to a man' diminutive
It hisses swan-vindictively at him.

Thereafter baffled silence mutes the heath,
Subdues the garish gorses with its breath,
And reigns moon-equal on the fusted heather.
He now too puzzled to pursue the game
Awaits her next move. This she does not make.

As a child's brain, born whole but prematurely
Might in a month have worked to standard duly,
But that month missing long as it survives
Lags from itself a month or more behind,
So the lost lover cannot understand
By what lack yet she sees him not a man
And gropes. But nature heedless presses on,
And oversoon the invisible marching sun
Flashes to Spica in the Virgin's heart,
Who, the word catching, ere he moves a yard
Vibrates to ecstasy on highest string

A note that throbs among the Seraphim.
The unicorns that nose about the door
Fling up their heads to hear it, and with horn
And hoof batter to enter: some to the back
Gallop to rescue: others mount the tank
Below the windows and attack the glass:
And others round and round the cottage race
Looking for weaker openings. Stays a pause
As if preparing for a final chord.
And then the Virgin cries.

At which sharp anguish like the crack of ice
All that was firm gave way. The moonlit night
Rocking as on a wave, the waters broke
Splashing their sweetness on the midnight rocks.
Over the tree-crests like a flock of finches
Darted and swooped exquisite joys and prickings
And tiny silver pain like that of fainting.
The sky spread broad with sudden glow of paining,
Then closed to darkness and the echoing
Of the fleet hooves of the sad fugitive
Unicorns, defaulting unicorns,
Upon the road. As they went, upward soared
A nearer echo that increased in power,
From a rough movement as of boys that ride
Unsure, to subtler motion, harmonied:
Now with increased hope, now with certitude,
As from far copses beaters' cries are tuned
Faintly but firmer as the birds approach.
Faintly but firmer sound the tended hopes
And with approaching knowledge every nerve
Kindles and every fold and bank is stirred,
Till the old radiance glares, and pain is drowned
In joy that floods through all the roads and towns
Turning the people out in holiday.

Now all contentable, contented is,
The folds and banks are sleepy: and the wind
Saunters at will, too lazy to discern
What's yet contentable upon the earth.

The mingled movements leave the softening pool,
And waters that have poured together soon
Cease to unite, and sink. Spreads, where was fire,
A double warmth of half assuaged desire.
Where unicorns their doting muzzles laid,
With melting ice as dear is scarleted.
And the dull aches that pay them for their care
So faithful through the years, unheeded are
In seeming perfectness within the sphere.

But when the day dawned bare of bird aubade
And sodden taste, and sour, of middle age
Awoke him, turned he to survey his bride:
And found there still half-sleeping at his side
A crab where he had seen a maiden's hand,
A corpse decaying where her flesh had lain,
A bullock and a ram where had been loving.
He left the bed with a loud cry of loathing
And naked wandered through the chilly house.
'What is this anuby of love,' he said, 'what ruse
Eats me and cheats me out of joy? Too true
Is the old tale of Helen, that wise Zeus
Set up an image of her face in Troy:
And thinking it was she, that quaint decoy
Men fought for, while she hidden lived alone.'

The Virgin stirred upstairs in bed alone
And wearily awoke. 'Why celebrate
Weddings with Tornaboda in their wake?'
She sighed, 'What have I married? Not a man,
But a menagerie of different men.'
She cried herself to sleep again: he walked: the sun
Rose, and set: and a whole month was gone.
Then through the twilight rose a yellow gloom.
Loxias save us! Yet another moon?

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Faber & Faber.)

Stuart Gilbert

Stuart Gilbert was an associate editor of transition, *to which he contributed criticism and some imaginative prose. He is best known by his authoritative commentary on James Joyce's* Ulysses *which exhaustively presents the parallel between that work and the* Odyssey.

DESIDERATA

Five grey walls leant inwards to a snowed-in skylight; underfoot a green metallic upcrop striated dusky humus. Polished by incessant pacing in dim pentagon, slightly sunken, bore the imprint of restless nights and days, wan evenings, cold dawns belated, muffled in snowy shrouds. As the light grew he gazed around in fear. Something had been added in the night. That stump of chalk, when he had laid himself to sleep, had been a finger's length, now was worn almost to the butt. Four sloping walls had taken toll of his dark cunning, four dreaming nights had he wrought unawares. They had followed him here, even into this safe place, this thick receptacle, his phantoms. Uninvited they had risen from the grave to ply sleeping fingers and smear their writing on the wall, shadows of shades, carrion desiccated or devoured, reforming in vivid ectoplasm from limbo or larder.

On the headless triangle of the first wall wings were flying in turbid water, rooted by slender filaments to the mud. A body male-female, self-sufficient, turned upon itself in convolute caresses. "I love me." Joy without end, amentiform, inflorescent. The serpent biting its own tail gyrated in pleasure of endless pursuit and sure fruition. Desire self-contained, loose to spread across under above through never beyond itself, because everywhere, in a flash permeated the end-beginnings of space.

"I love me. With cunning, lingering passes, soft as catkin pollen, slowly as westering clouds' procession in the antarctic dusk, exquisitely as the magnetic make-and-break, for and to across the tiny interval of a vibrant spring, I caress me."

"Do I love me?"

"Completely. No alien desire can live in this my flame, no shooting star, but, fallen, is absorbed by me. I am the beginning and end, bent tracks of parallels that meet. When I kiss me the ring of time and square of space coalescent merge interlocked. Over and through the mountains of air, above below the waves of time, we

move in massive orbit, the Milky Way a speck of dust between our tangled tentacles."

Light increasing fell on the second wall. Grey light on greying hair, grey madonna eyes, round maternal bosom. Dear eyes of a hard madonna, censorious, blind to beauty, beautiful. In mist beyond loomed a spectral male knotting knouts of serpents.

"I am diminished to her bambino, maternity's whipping-boy, sorry spawn of her, baby-mine. Paternity-maternity's callow creature, I am flayed by his tourment, mauled by her maelstrom. Crouching from his whips I bury my lips in those hateful, beloved breasts—frail moon-calf cowed and bullied—in their valley taste soft beauty, perfume, coolth of white fountains, abyss of soft abundance. Take and kiss, tear and twist fingers cast in your matrix, spilth of your body, take and eat that I return to our atonement. Take me back, beloved, to your peace."

Number three, this way number three! "This way, gents, for the genuine *danse du ventre*. This way, mister man, for the red room. Who'll buy my swe-eet viol-ettes? Fat sweet'arts all alive O. Seven for six or a penny a shy'un. Say, simps, don't just rubber around, walk right in. Neck for nothing." Nude, crudely lax, crinkled tissues overlap, slabs slap over, fold on manifold. Photo-bitchens—how Bridget, undressed the salad served, sweet surfeit of simple Jungsters, to be the pure all things prure, a minor's dream of heaven. Fritturing our *pays du tendre* where Sir Loin embraising Trixie Tenderfoot teases ten tickled toes.

Accelerate her. *Auf. Hinauf.* Tread on the garce! Acceler onanon accel onon acc crracrrash cident. Dent. Dented tinny tender sprawls telescoped on her tracks. *Petite, chère p'tite mort. Post casum omne animal triste.* But not long, not for long. Up, tender; horsey, *sursum eauda* for funiculifuniculir upgoing. Off again—*ah jeunesse, schönesse!* we go. Das ewig Weibliche zieht uns hinauf. Bis, Gerty! Hoch, Hoch! Hit sir!

Soft and large, as whales, as sea-anemones, blond, black, brown, three sumptuous Graces as Mynheer Rubens saw them, they have folded their arms in false pudency, inviting love, love, love. Soft and sweet, erotoxin, sweet and low, *Liebestod,* low and luscious, ort, made for love, love, love.

But from the fourth wall a woman looked down sad-eyed, serene in sorrow, upon the shadow of a cross. In renunciation of the carnal, bittersweet parasite of the soul, her mind is surely fixed on negation, shade of a shadow. Her love a shadow love, her hands weave

ghost-caresses. The beast satiety, tame at last, fawns far apart, no longer terrible. Across the void a whispered word flutters on white wings; one word may suffice in this great silence to open the gate. Sesame. One word enough. Speeding feet are tired at last, clinging hands grow limp and fall apart, pressed lips ache for release, and in the sun red flowers droop, weary of too much light. Here is grey calm, cool dusk, silence vespertine. Regret and hopes, desire and loathing have folded their wings in drugged repose.

The woman looked down, serene, sad-eyed, upon the shadow of a cross.

Five grey walls leant inwards to a snowed-in skylight. The light grew bleak, a bitter wind wailed without. Now, for the first time, he stayed restless feet to gaze fearfully at the fifth wall, grey void. "To-morrow what will the light reveal? What dregs remain to outpour? What monster yet lurks at the jungle's frontier, waiting for the night and my surrender? To-morrow?"

Night passed. Without day dawned but, prisoned within five grey walls, the dark endured. Only when the skylight turned vertical to the sun, for an instant, a watery ray trembled down. For the last time, the last, he opened dying eyes to peer up in anguish at the fifth wall.

The fifth wall was blank.

T. B. Rudmose-Brown

T. B. Rudmose-Brown is professor of Romance languages at Trinity College, Dublin. He is a scholarly critic whose work should influence the younger Irish critics: and, although of a pre-war generation, stands out as having anticipated the direction of much contemporary French and English criticism. He has written about Racine, *of whose works he has edited a critical edition. He has also published a* Short History of French Literature *and a book of verse,* The Walled Garden.

GRACE WITHHELD FROM JEAN RACINE

In all the earlier tragedies of Jean Racine except *Bérénice* passion rather than love is the pivot of the action. A man wants, and does not get, or a woman wants and does not get. We dice with fate. But her die is loaded and she casts two sixes every time. We cannot win.

In *Phèdre,* there is, of course, this sense of fatality, but there is something more. Phaedra knows her passion to be guilty as well as foredoomed to vanity. She dies not a victim to her passion but to her sense of sin. There can be no evasion of this interpretation. Racine has underlined it by his mere choice of plot. He does not take the legend of Phaedra because he has, like Chateaubriand or Byron, a guilty knowledge of

The dear horror of the incestuous kiss

or like Shelley, a poetic, or like Pirandello, a psychological interest in the sin itself, but in order to emphasize the idea of guilt superimposed on the earlier idea of fatality and futility. Whence came this conception with sufficient driving force to inspire his greatest tragedy? From Port-Royal, no doubt. But why was Racine turned to Port-Royal only after so long a recalcitrancy? Why was he impelled to write his last terrible play of passion, and guilty passion, of passion, too, more purely physical than in any of his earlier tragedies?

Consider the other couple of lovers too, Hippolytus, innocent of all criminal intention, loses his Aricie, also, by his unmerited death. The love of these two, fair and sweet, finds no more consummation than the violent passion of Phaedra. It is as if Racine, himself a victim of

Vénus tout entière a sa proie attachée

had looked longingly, as Phaedra looked on the love of Hippolytus for Aricie, on the possibility of innocent love, and had found it a dream, impossible of existence save in the mind that conceived it, utterly impossible of realization, and had pronounced all love, in its essence and by its very nature, inevitably guilty. The tiger and the ape could not be exorcized by any fiction. The conscious mind might imagine, but the sub-conscious must blast. All else was illusion at best, at worst hypocrisy.

. . . . .

One day in the early autumn of 1618, Racine, who liked gardens and flowers, induced his friends La Fontaine, Boileau and Chapelle to accompany him to Versailles. La Fontaine put the manuscript of his newly-finished *"Psyché"* in his pocket, and they set out. Arrived at Versailles, it was not easy to drag La Fontaine away from the Numidian cranes and the pelicans, in the *Ménagerie.* He records that pelicans are whiter than swans with a blush of pink beneath

the white. Racine preferred the *Orangerie.* The white jasmine recalled to him some verses which he insisted on declaiming:

> Sweet jessamine untarnished by the wind,
> Your whiteness my Aminta's bring to mind

dating from the happier days of his first enthusiasm for Marquise Thérèse du Parc; and in the orange trees lovelier in autumn, laden with golden fruit, than even in their spring blossoming of fragrant snow, he found an image of desire unspoiled in the fulfilling. After dinner they went through the Castle. La Fontaine stopped only to admire the King's bed and the hangings of his bedroom in some figured Chinese fabric. He hastened to bring his friends to the *Grotte de Téthys* (which is hardly a Grotto, as we know them, with its magnificent floor and ceiling and walls and the groups of statuary which adorned its alcoves) and took his manuscript from his pocket. He began to read aloud the story of Love and Psyche. When he paused, Boileau drew Chapelle into a long discussion. Racine went off impatiently; criticism never failed to irritate him. The others followed him to the Terrace whence the whole perspective of the Gardens could be seen from the head of the *Rampes de Latone.* Soon they settled again to hear the rest of La Fontaine's story, this time out of doors and to Racine's satisfaction, in full view of the Bassin de Latone, flashing red marble, the *Allée Royale* beyond it, the *Bassin d'Apollon,* and the *Grand Canal* like a highway to the sunset.

La Fontaine paused. Love and Psyche were in each other's arms. Racine sighed. He remembered. So La Fontaine tells us, but he does not tell us what it was he remembered. . . .

A year and a half ago Marquise Thérèse de Gorle, wife of René Berthelot, on the stage du Parc, had given him her beauty in its prime. She had disdained Molière and the Pantaloon Corneille but had melted before the young god Racine. And he remembered how Axiane had given herself to him. Now he was Orestes pursued by the furies, not of unrequited love, but of unsatisfied passion. He could not swim with her in a sea of emotion. He would have pledged her in wine, not in *"tisane."* Old Corneille would have drunk her sticky brew gladly and read her his copies of gallant verses, Petrarch to her Laura.

But Racine had given her a part in his own great play, and laboriously taught it to her, line by line. . . . Thank God, she had not played Hermione. Her beauty had carried off Andromaque.

She would not let him go. He could not bear to continue. Only death could end it. He put the possibility from him. It made him feel like a murderer.

La Fontaine went on reading. Racine missed most of the story. It was almost sundown when Polyphile finished. Boileau was at it with Chapelle again. But Racine interrupted—"Look at the sunset over the Canal!" and he got up and walked away alone through the light golden like a Claude Gellée. . . .

The Duke of La Rochefoucauld passed him with a disdainful bow, meditating a cynical maxim. . . . A greater than he approached. Racine bent low before Phoebus-Apollo and with him the Duchess of Montespan. . . . Louise de la Vallière limped in her train.

On December 13th of the same year, Marquise Thérèse died, under the ministrations of La Voisin. Death had ended it. Racine was inconsolable, not because he had lost her but because, as he felt, he had killed her. The sense of sin, the heritage of his Jansenist upbringing, reawoke, obsessing him. Remorse plucked at him unceasingly. Bareheaded he followed her bier like one demented.

The absurd rumour already afloat, that he had procured La Voisin to poison her, seemed to him true in essential if not in detail. He had never wished her dead, to be sure, but he had been fully conscious that her death alone could free him. He had surrounded her last days with every kindness and delicate attention, except the one she had craved. Pity he had given her, but not love. The frail woman on the sick-bed, with her big eyes in an emaciated face, her gentleness and tenderness, had stirred him to almost unbearable emotion. But his passion was dead, and she knew it. He had brought her rare fruit from Virginia on an Italian dish, but a bunch of grapes from Auteuil with a word of true affection might have saved her. She had died because she had not the will to live.

He paced the willow-walk contemplating his own baseness and the inevitability of all disaster. The bare branches of the pollards pierced the evening. Two years ago in autumn the willow-leaves, crissing like a Chinese pattern, had blurred the clear sky of evening and chequered on the path a trembling design of sunlight and shadow. But now . . . He looked at the deep, green-coated canal in which the dead leaves were drowning. All was vain, love had failed, life was hollow and empty. All this splendour was hard and shallow. Louis weighed upon him. Versailles was like a leaden mantle, worn by a soul in Hell. The social order engulfed the individual. Titus, loving Berénice, was overpowered by Rome. So he wrote his one

play of external fate, so different from his other tragedies, in all of which the doom comes from within; the only play, too, in which love plays a part, the love of Bérénice for Titus, Bérénice who has no thought but to give, and for Titus's sake, surrenders him to Rome, without ceasing to love him.

Racine was in the mood when physical passion takes its most violent hold. He was ready for Marie Desmares.

Racine had been reading a collection of lyrics, *Les Délices de la Poésie française,* published by Toussaint du Bray at the Sign of the Ripe Ears in the rue Saint-Jacques in 1621. His friend Jean-Ogier de Gombauld had given it to him before he died, some years ago, apologetically. "Those were my friends. We lived nobly then. They knew how to write." The pale verses of Voiture and his ape Godeau, Bishop of Grasse, disgusted the old man who had known Ronsard. . . . Marino had been his guest. The brilliant galaxy of the early sixteen hundreds, Honoré Laugier de Porchères, Pierre Motin, Pierre Berthelot, Scipion de Grammont, Antoine de Nervèze, had all sunned themselves in the rays of that golden Italian poetry, all kisses and yellow wine. Yes, and Etienne Durand, the cousin and lover of the mother of Cinq-Mars, before he had been broken on the wheel. . . . All dead long ago! That was the penalty of living a hundred years.

In Racine's memory there ran that line of Pierre Motin:

A vos pieds voyez-moi votre fatale prise

a direct cry of passion in an artificial poet. Gombauld, direct and simple himself, had grown accustomed to that treble distillation of strange metaphors and involution of expression which had come to be called Precosity or alambication. "I am like that," he thought, "the predestined prey of Marie Desmares, and I lie, a hunted animal, at her feet, taken and beseeching my pursuer."

As soon as he had heard her voice after the *Rentrée de Pâques,* he knew that she had rent him, forever. Here was the perfect Hermione! He had seen that her eyes were too small, but he had soon forgotten that in the call of her body. Every moment away from her was torment, every moment with her worse torment. She gave everything but withheld herself. If only he could break the spell and see in her only a woman like hundreds of others, to have and be done with. Why her and not another? The difference from her to another was in each particular but the breadth of a knife-edge. Yet the cumulative effect of those differences drew him to her by an irresistible

force and repelled him from all other women. She was all he wanted. . . . Girardon had modelled her for one of those nymphs of his cast in lead bas-relief in the gardens of Versailles. Racine saw them, intolerably lovely, a bird-song in this mausoleum of Louis the Great. There she was as desirable as in life, and essentially as cold, giving nothing of her spirit. How could he stay or go? How conquer this mad passion, this overwhelming flame? How do without it?

If only she loved him . . . would give him herself. Might he then not win to the heart of her mysterious being? What availed but the contact of two personalities, of the divine essence of him and her.

He went back to the Theatre to superintend the revival of *Andromaque*. She should play Hermione. She understood his art. She did not need his coaching. What a tragedy would be their joint work! She would make his play all he had meant it to be. They would see what a dolt Corneille was. Marie would make the part live. What a voice! At least she wasn't sentimental. She could look at life and accept it. Corneille's "Edüige" in that dull old *"Pertharite"* reconceived by Jean Racine and acted by Marie Desmares—there lay immortality! He and she, author and actress, made one and given eternal life in the expression of all passion and all despair! After Hermione, Roxane and Phaedra! Always Marie Desmares. Her passion answered his passion, but her being eluded him always. Had she nothing to give but that body he could never make his, that cup of poison that parched his throat the more, the more he drank? Must she be for ever his adversary?

Brooding so, he wrote in 1677, in his own blood, the tragedy of *Phèdre*. Marie was Phaedra, obsessed by love for him, by guilty love that nothing could assuage or cure. He himself was Hippolytus refusing. But he too was Phaedra, and she the reluctant boy. And all lovers who ever loved were Phaedra. What a part for her! How she would play it . . . and be it. The *Solitaires* were right, after all.

The play written and produced, he left her and the stage. Like Tiberius or Charles V, he laid down his sceptre and his orb. Port Royal had him in her sequestered fold, a penitent redeemed at last, after that terrific play in which La Champmeslé, Marie Desmares, had eclipsed even herself. Not she, but Phaedra, haggard and broken by her great passion, had told her guilt and died the victim of Venus.

In Port Royal he found no peace, but only a growing sense of an all-pervading injustice, and came to the conception of an unjust and cruel Providence who made the lover as he was and stretched him on the rack, who sowed in every high and noble aspiration a seed of

failure and weakness that grew in evil and disaster, till in his last and greatest play, "le chef-d'oeuvre de l'esprit humain," as Voltaire, who alone of all critics understood Racine's purpose, called it, he hurled the fate of Athaliah contemptuously and blasphemously as a challenge to the "cruel Dieu des Juifs," and died in his contumacy and despair.

Love he had not known. Not that he had stooped to any conscious baseness, nor asked anything but the highest, as he conceived it. In Marquise Thérèse de Gorle, in Marie Desmares, he had sought to grasp the eternal and internal essence, the soul, as he would have called it, the unique thing that made each herself and no other. But he had sought the spirit through the body, not knowing that the body comes as an incidental and unconsidered gift, when once the spirit has been sought and won. He, like Baudelaire, had asked what could not be given, and like him, finding not, he too denied. He is limited by the same incapacity. Their conclusion is drawn from false premises. That is why Racine, in spite of his almost superhuman perfection as a writer, is not a Dante nor a Shakespeare,

. . . . . .

*After writing this essay, I have found that Marcel Proust (*Nouvelle Revue Francaise, *1 er Juin 1921) had already said:* Rien n'est si baudelairien que *Phèdre,* rien n'est si digne de Racine . . . que les *Fleurs du Mal," although, to be sure, he referred to the manner rather than the matter of their work.*

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Nancy Cunard

Nancy Cunard is an Englishwoman living in Paris, where she directs the Hours Press. *Her work is not well known, but is talented and reflects the movement out of the cynical deterioration in modern poetry. The poems here given are part of a new book* Hallali *which she is about to publish.*

BETWEEN TIME AND ETC.

Living in 'the past' and 'the future'
I see barrages and heart-breakings,
Sameness running by sameness, defied by difference,
Difference overcome, etc.

ETC's large, is omnipresent.
The coming and going of ETC, (new god).
What to think—and to whom hand it?
Yet Time is hardly Etc.
Through with time soon, on with Etc.

We depend on a word
Dijon, Guéret, for our thought-lines,
    our Marches and summers.
On . . . Aima, or how-would-it-have-been
    'granted certain considerations?'
On . . I lay in a field and thought to go further . . .
On . . . 'the perfect sonnet.'
On . . . death Nov. 6—deaths that are to be.
For before all "a synchroneous comprehensive notion of things" is
    it not?
One hand on the telephone, one opening, say, a bill
When the fact of each death first . . .
No need for pondering what you know and they must guess,
(The gaps between, ghost-lines.)

All of it 'so much one thing and another'—
So in Venice
That repository of old ships
And the fan-bridge—if you linger by dates.
Everywhere the
Ephemeridæ of nights, alone and not alone.

Beginning with Dowson, then "in Timon's rage,"
Having it out with love and time . . .
Are we the r e a l ?
Started out of utmost improbability,
Putting it all mainly between asterisks,
    falling into metres . . .
In a time of waiting—(didst ever know any other time?)
I knew the apparent sweet and sharp of the lives of others,
Such obstinate credos as wave on wave,
The never samely repeated BLANK of each spring,
    (shall we say?)

O landscape of the green field, gin bottle and the intention
Next year's hot-foot—with his As you were!

LOVE, DEATH, TIME, WEATHER—

so is your Englishman.
O go for a sailor as it's peacetime
And shatter the context of the blueredwhite.
Say . . . do they touch at Colon, do they fetch up
in the Toulon Darse?
They do, they swing about—it's up to you.
After so many other afters is there no now?

But I don't think the Poste Restante
Changes our inner geographies, nor yet heals hearts.
Much—nor yet do time's heels
Properly leaden heart's spring-buds under,
nor now, not finally.
Man, your brief-coiled ache flips back into place like a curl.
"Three . . . Four . . . will my love come?"
Late, late! On morning's wings
A-mourning what's *got,* not *held.*
Well, what's 'held'?
That hand on the bed-cover, that's surely a finality,
Visible focus, punkt—
Held, or 'for later' . . . ?
(such things have been.)

Had I no love I'd a'many,
I'm wrongly engrooved—
Eye and I of myself how did I come to live in this place?
ETC names it.
Shifting zones of the centre!

But the mothwings calmly nebulate round the
Philippine rice-gods—
This stamp to what collector?

LOVE'S ALBA AGAINST TIME, TIME'S AGAINST LOVE

I

Time counts the lovers' strokes,
Each, stringing his knots along endeavour.
Devil—what have I to say to thee?
Wij beminnen elkander . . .
    We love, love, we love on, in dutch—so.
Who *says* unsays much later.
Who all unsays has *all* said, once.
O N C E . . .? (but that's not treachery, that's Time—)

De fil en aiguille, au fil de l'heure . . .
Filles et fils de l'heure, écoutez:
"Il y eut une fois' (Ay, that's my enemy)
'Once a time' 'ago,'
And as Aragon has it
"Aima, ai-ma"—
    You need no other histories.

II

So in the blue room
What's mine's yours, ours . . . i.e. in fief holden
For that h i m s e l f Time is;
So it's not you and I—it's Time's sport.
(I'll puppet me opposite you though.)

III

Time's foe, my friend—
Gin, the white king—
In his ermines lives possibility,
His card-houses are my spanish castles
To which the thread of Ariadne is
    what will have been.

IV

Lo, do you explain in your big books
What's brain?

You have been a'wrastlin Time long enough to know
The other knight in the lists.

V

Maybe, maybe 'tis a mexican,
    a mask on a desert.
The desert's full of sacrificial round-stones
    well-blooded,
You *see* none of these—
These to be sure live in Part 4 . . .
And what's that, hell!? pray?!
Part 4 is a symbology
    in a post meridian perpetuum,
Very much part of Time, sir,
Very much part, sir—

VI

And here's your shaving-water and your shoe-trees,
braces and pommatum and your watch and key-chains,
also nine o'clock sir, all safe sir—but not
    your lover, sir.

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Hugh McDiarmid

Hugh McDiarmid is the pen-name of C. M. Grieve, a Scots writer who under his own name has published a volume of prose, Annals Of the Five Senses. *He is a poet writing in "synthetic Scots", an amalgam of Scottish dialects similar to the Norwegian* Landsmaal, *but which he has extended to include elements of Scottish and Irish Gaelic, French, German and Spanish: there is a resemblance to the linguistic experiments of Joyce and of Bielyi, and McDiarmid has in fact translated some of Bielyi's work and the work of other modern Russian poets. His own verse books include* A Drunk Man Looks At The Thistle *and* To Circumjack Cencrastus, *both long psychological poems. He has contributed as literary editor to* The New Age: *also to* The Scots Observer *and* The Irish Statesman.

McDiarmid, who was born in 1892, is a leader of the Scottish Renaissance *movement, and of the Scottish nationalist movement in*

connection with which he is strongly anglophobe and pro-Sinn Fein. Nevertheless his work is not well known in Scotland and in Ireland. It is, in spite of its superficial difficulties, vivid and contemporary, and deserves the application for which it calls.

STAOILIGARY.

Wad that I held Staoiligary
And the four pennies o' Drimisdale,
And had never seen a news-sheet,
No' even *"The Daily Mail,"*
The fifteen generations afore me
Could lippen me no' to fail
Into the darkness o' alien time
To carry my sang and sgeul
As the duck when she hears the thunder
Dances to her ain Port a Beul!

Staoiligary and the four pennies of Drimisdale—lands assigned for generations to the gread bardic family of the MacCrimmons.
lippen—trust
sgeul—cry
Port a Beul—mouth-music

(Courtesy of the Author and of *The Irish Statesman.*)

THE MAVIS OF PABAL.

I am the mavis o' Pabal
Back on the top o' the hill,
My voice and wings still wantin'
A wee thing in strength and skill.
I am the mavis o' Pabal, lang
I've lain wi' my heid on my breist
In a day that was dark, my sang
Forgotten like licht in the East.
But the dawn is braken' at last
And I'm back on the top o' the hill
And I'll sing as I sang in the past
—If singin' depends upon will!

I am the mavis o' Pabal,
A pool cut off frae the sea,
A tree without root that stands
On the grund unsteadily.
I should ha'e stayed wi' the rest
Doon in Coille Ghrumach still
And no' ettled to be on the crest
O' this bricht impossible hill,
For poetry's no' made in a lifetime
And I lack a livin' past;
I stand on the top o' the hill
—But the miracle canna last!

Maun I flee the Atlantic tae
Whaur ten thoosand o' the clan
Host whaur the first ane landit
—I'd leifer ha'e seen nae dawn.
Can I sing them back hame again?
The nicht has lasted owre lang,
And I doot if American Clansmen
Are worth the orts o' a sang.
—O it's fine to be back in the sun
And the shoots are tender and green
But I'm lanely, and, flute as I will,
There's nae sign o' a mate to be seen!

ettled—sought
host—gather
orts—fragments

(Courtesy of the Author and of *The Scots Observer.*)

CLAIS LINNEACH

(To Aodh de Blacam)

At dawn at the heid o' Clais Linneach
A mile frae Fuaran Dhe
I saw a wee cloud that awa doon
In Glen Guisachan lay.

It grew as the sun's strength grew
Till it filled ilka glen and corrie
And covered a' but the heichmaist taps
O' the Cairngorms, billowin' hoary.

The sun's licht on the clood reflected
As on the waves o' a sea,
And as frae the Ark on Ararat
The warld then was to me;
Syne fifty miles owre the mist-ocean
Wha but Alasdair MacMhaighstir stude?—
Pricked oot in the blue and gowd there
In his maist idiosyncratic mood!

Faurer awa', steeply, oot o' the sun-bathed
Distant Atlantic's waters
The great poets o' Gaelic Ireland
Soared up frae the rags and tatters
O' the muckle grey mist o' Englishry—
Phoenix flight frae the ashes upbeatin'—
Raifteri, O Rathaille, O Suilleabhain,
Feiriter, Haicead, and Ceitinn!—

No' muckle's been tint in the Deluge
Suppose it subsides nae mair.
I'm brawly content wi' what's left,
And the ignorance flowin' doon there
Emphasises by way o' contrast
The glorious music abune
—Great poems manifestin' at aince
Ilka phase o' the sun and mune!

MacMhaighstir (18th Century) is the greatest Scottish Gaelic poet; and Raifteri, O Rathaille and the others, Gaelic poets of the Penal age in Ireland.

ilka—every; *syne*—then; *muckle*—big, much; *tint*—lost; *brawly*—perfectly; *abune*—above.

CHRISTINE

There's owre mony killywimples in your singin'
It minds me o' my een
When they seek to spae the weather by the sun
And there's nocht but rainbows to be seen.

The lintie sang coonterpoint when the ouzel yelpit
And your sang's faurer frae me
Than the sun frae the earth when its rays in the gray lift
Blinter like honesty.

killywimples—ups and downs
een—eyes
lift—sky
honesty—the pods of the plant

(Courtesy of the Author.)

Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf may claim to be, with E. M. Forster, the most considerable living English novelist. Her work is characterised by great psychological insight and a style which, though superficially abstract, proves on analysis to be strongly objective, to the point of being an inversion of the "pathetic fallacy." It is best seen in this light in Mrs. Dalloway *and* To The Lighthouse. *Hers is a writing always in danger of appearing undirected and dissipated, and although there are traces of this in* Orlando, *the measure of her success is the measure in which she has always escaped that danger. Of several books of criticism the best is probably* The Common Reader. *Her last book was* A Room Of One's Own.

From TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

But the dead, thought Lily, encountering some obstacle in her design which made her pause and ponder, stepping back a foot or so, Oh the dead! she murmured, one pitied them, one brushed them aside, one had even a little contempt for them. They are at our mercy. Mrs. Ramsay has faded and gone, she thought. We can override her wishes, improve away her limited, old-fashioned ideas.

She recedes further and further from us. Mockingly she seemed to to see her there at the end of the corridor of years saying, of all incongruous things, "Marry, marry!" (sitting very upright early in the morning with the birds beginning to cheep in the garden outside). And one would have to say to her, It has all gone against your wishes. They're happy like that; I'm happy like this. Life has changed completely. At that all her being, even her beauty, became for a moment, dusty and out of date. For a moment Lily, standing there, with the sun hot on her back, summing up the Rayleys, triumphed over Mrs. Ramsay, who would never know how Paul went to coffee-houses and had a mistress; how he sat on the ground and Minta handed him his tools; how she stood here painting, had never married, not even William Bankes.

Mrs. Ramsay had planned it. Perhaps, had she lived, she would have compelled it. Already that summer he was "the kindest of men." He was "the first scientist of his age, my husband says." He was also "poor William—it makes me so unhappy, when I go to see him, to find nothing nice in his house—no one to arrange the flowers." So they were sent for walks together, and she was told, with that faint touch of irony that made Mrs. Ramsay slip through one's fingers, that she had a scientific mind; she liked flowers; she was so exact. What was this mania of hers for marriage? Lily wondered, stepping to and fro from her easel.

(Suddenly, as suddenly as a star slides into the sky, a reddish light seemed to burn in her mind, covering Paul Rayley, issuing from him. It rose like a fire sent up in token of some celebration by savages on a distant beach. She heard the roar and the crackle. The whole sea for miles round ran red and gold. Some winy smell mixed with it and intoxicated her, for she felt again her own headlong desire to throw herself off the cliff and be drowned looking for a pearl brooch on a beach. And the roar and the crackle repelled her with fear and disgust, as if while she saw its splendour and power she saw too how it fed on the treasure of the house, greedily, disgustingly, and she loathed it. But for a sight, for a glory it surpassed everything in her experience, and burnt year after year like a signal fire on a desert island at the edge of the sea, and one had only to say "in love" and instantly, as happened now, up rose Paul's fire again. And it sank and she said to herself, laughing, "The Rayleys"; how Paul went to coffee-houses and played chess.)

She had only escaped by the skin of her teeth though, she thought. She had been looking at the table-cloth, and it had flashed upon her

that she would move the tree to the middle, and need never marry anybody, and she had felt an enormous exultation. She had felt, now she could stand up to Mrs. Ramsay—a tribute to the astonishing power Mrs. Ramsay had over one. Do this she said, and one did it. Even her shadow at the window with James was full of authority. She remembered how William Bankes had been shocked by her neglect of the significance of mother and son. Did she not admire their beauty? he said. But William, she remembered, had listened to her with his wise child's eyes when she explained how it was not irreverence: how a light there needed a shadow there and so on. She did not intend to disparage a subject which, they agreed, Raphael had treated divinely. She was not cynical. Quite the contrary. Thanks to his scientific mind he understood—a proof of disinterested intelligence which had pleased her and comforted her enormously. One could talk of painting then seriously to a man. Indeed, his friendship had been one of the pleasures of her life. She loved William Bankes.

They went to Hampton Court and he always left her, like the perfect gentleman he was, plenty of time to wash her hands, while he strolled by the river. That was typical of their relationship. Many things were left unsaid. Then they strolled through the courtyards, and admired, summer after summer, the proportions and the flowers, and he would tell her things, about perspective, about architecture, as they walked, and he would stop to look at a tree, or the view over the lake, and admire a child (it was his great grief—he had no daughter) in the vague aloof way that was natural to a man who spent so much of his time in laboratories that the world when he came out seemed to dazzle him, so that he walked slowly, lifted his hand to screen his eyes and paused, with his head thrown back, merely to breathe the air. Then he would tell her how his housekeeper was on her holiday; he must buy a new carpet for the staircase. Perhaps she would go with him to buy a new carpet for the staircase. And once something had led him to talk about the Ramsays and he had said when he first saw her she had been wearing a grey hat; she was not more than nineteen or twenty. She was astonishingly beautiful. There he stood looking down the avenue at Hampton Court, as if he could see her there among the fountains.

She looked now at the drawing-room step. She saw, through William's eyes, the shape of a woman, peaceful and silent, with downcast eyes. She sat musing, pondering (she was in grey that day, Lily thought). Her eyes were bent. She would never lift them. Yes, thought Lily, looking intently, I must have seen her look like that,

but not in grey; nor so still, nor so young, nor so peaceful. The figure came readily enough. She was astonishingly beautiful, William said. But beauty had this penalty—it came too readily, came too completely. It stilled life—froze it. One forgot the little agitations; the flush, the pallor, some queer distortion, some light or shadow, which made the face unrecognisable for a moment and yet added a quality one saw for ever after. It was simpler to smooth that all out under the cover of beauty. But what was the look she had, Lily wondered, when she clapped her deer-stalker's hat on her head, or ran across the grass, or scolded Kennedy, the gardener? Who could tell her? Who could help her?

Against her will she had come to the surface, and found herself half out of the picture, looking, a little dazedly, as if at unreal things, at Mr. Carmichael. He lay on his chair with his hands clasped above his paunch not reading, or sleeping, but basking like a creature gorged with existence. His book had fallen on to the grass.

She wanted to go straight up to him and say, "Mr. Carmichael!" Then he would look up benevolently as always, from his smoky vague green eyes. But one only woke people if one knew what one wanted to say to them. And she wanted to say not one thing, but everything. Little words that broke up the thought and dismembered it said nothing. "About life, about death, about Mrs. Ramsay"—no, she thought, one could say nothing to nobody. The urgency of the moment always missed its mark. Words fluttered sideways and struck the object inches too low. Then one gave it up; then the idea sunk back again; then one became like most middle-aged people, cautious, furtive, with wrinkles between the eyes and a look of perpetual apprehension. For how could one express in words these emotions of the body? express that emptiness there? (She was looking at the drawing-room steps; they looked extraordinarily empty). It was one's body feeling, not one's mind. The physical sensations that went with the bare look of the steps had become suddenly extremely unpleasant. To want and not to have, sent all up her body a hardness, a hollowness, a strain. And then to want and not to have—to want and want—how that wrung the heart, and wrung it again and again! Oh Mrs. Ramsay! she called out silently, to that essence which sat by the boat, that abstract one made of her, that woman in grey, as if to abuse her for having gone, and then having gone, come back again. It had seemed so safe, thinking of her. Ghost, air, nothingness, a thing you could play with easily and safely at any time of the day or night, she had been that, and then suddenly she

put her hand out and wrung the heart thus. Suddenly, the empty drawing-room steps, the frill of the chair inside, the puppy tumbling on the terrace, the whole wave and whisper of the garden became like curves and arabesques flourishing round a centre of complete emptiness.

"What does it mean? How do you explain it all?" she wanted to say, turning to Mr. Carmichael again. For the whole world seemed to have dissolved in this early morning hour into a pool of thought, a deep basin of reality, and one could almost fancy that had Mr. Carmichael spoken, a little tear would have rent the surface of the pool. And then? Something would emerge. A hand would be shoved up, a blade would be flashed. It was nonsense of course.

A curious notion came to her that he did after all hear the things she could not say. He was an inscrutable old man, with the yellow stain on his beard, and his poetry, and his puzzles, sailing serenely through a world which satisfied all his wants, so that she thought he had only to put down his hand where he lay on the lawn to fish up anything he wanted. She looked at her picture. That would have been his answer, presumably—how "you" and "I" and "she" pass and vanish; nothing stays; all changes; but not words, not paint. Yet it would be hung in the attics, she thought; it would be rolled up and flung under a sofa; yet even so, even of a picture like that, it was true. One might say, even of this scrawl, not of that actual picture, perhaps, but of what it attempted, that it "remained for ever", she was going to say, or, for the words spoken sounded even to herself, too boastful, to hint, wordlessly; when, looking at the picture, she was surprised to find that she could not see it. Her eyes were full of a hot liquid (she did not think of tears at first) which, without disturbing the firmness of her lips, made the air thick, rolled down her cheeks. She had perfect control of herself—Oh yes!—in every other way. Was she crying then for Mrs. Ramsay, without being aware of any unhappiness? She addressed old Mr. Carmichael again. What was it then? What did it mean? Could things thrust their hands up and grip one; could the blade cut; the fist grasp? Was there no safety? No learning by heart the ways of the world? No guide, no shelter, but all was miracle, and leaping from the pinnacle of a tower into the air? Could it be, even for elderly people, that this was life?—startling, unexpected, unknown? For one moment she felt that if they both got up, here, now on the lawn, and demanded an explanation, why was it so short, why was it so inexplicable, said it with violence, as two fully equipped human beings

from whom nothing should be hid might speak, then, beauty would roll itself up; the space would fill; those empty flourishes would form into shape; if they shouted loud enough Mrs. Ramsay would return. "Mrs. Ramsay!" she said aloud, "Mrs. Ramsay!" The tears ran down her face.

(Courtesy of the Author and of the Messrs. Harcourt, Brace & Co.)

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